causality and emptiness

The Wisdom of Nagarjuna

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causality and emptiness: The Wisdom of Nagarjuna

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I dedicate this book to the late Khenpo Migmar Tsering, principal of the Sakya Institute of Higher Buddhist Studies, Rajpur, Dehra Dun, India.

His wisdom, compassion and genuine good humour are greatly missed by his students and friends.

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Author's Preface

Genesis

In the early seventies when I first went to India to study Buddhism, I soon came into contact with H.H. Sakya Trizin the forty first hierarch of the Sakya Order of Tibetan Buddhism and the Sakya community of scholars and monks which surrounded Him at Dehra Dun and Mussoorie. It was H.H. who first introduced Jay Goldburg and myself to N@g@rjuna's *The Good Hearted Letter*.[1] That happy event eventually led to a Translation of the letter which has been much appreciated over the years by students of Buddhism.

Not long afterwards, I began to work on translations of some of N@g@rjuna's shorter texts which were then still untranslated. The first was very short indeed, N@g@rjuna's *The Heart of Interdependent Origination*.[2] Despite of its brevity however, it proved to have more than enough in it to keep a young scholar occupied with it for sometime. It still seems to me to be of indispensible for understanding the Buddhist conception of Interdependent Origination.

The next work to attract my interest was N@g@rjuna's *Emptiness: The Seventy Stanzas*.[3] It was of a totally different order from *The Heart of Interdependent Origination*. In the first place, it was considerably longer than the former. In addition, the subject matter was more difficult since it dealt with the key applications of the Philosophy of Emptiness. The translation of this text, accomplished with the help of Tibetan scholars of the Gelukpa and Sakya traditions, took place over a period of several years.

During the course of the translation of *Emptiness: The Seventy Stanzas*, I became increasingly interested in studying

[1] *Suh=llekha*

[2] *Prat$tyasamutp@dah=dayak@rik@*

[3] */#nyat@saptati*

another of N@g@rjuna's shorter texts, *Reasoning: the Sixty Stanzas.*[4] Finally, in 1985 when I was in Singapore working for the Ministry of Education, the opportunity to work on N@g@rjuna's *Reasoning: The Sixty stanzas* came my way. I was able to make a translation of the text with the Help of a Sakya scholar who was then resident at the Sakya center there. Later I was also able to consult Candrak$rti's commentary to the work. In the course of time, I was able to construct an English rendering of the major themes of the commentary.

The translation of the texts that appear in this book therefore were completed over a period of twenty years from 1971 to 1991. Two of the text included in this book have in fact appeared before in print. The first to do so was *The Heart of Interdependent Origination.* It was published in 1974 in the Journal of Buddhist Studies of the University of Delhi. The next to appear was the translation of N@g@rjuna's *The Good Hearted Letter* in 1978. The remaining two translations have never been published. Of the two that have appeared earlier, the translation of *The Heart of Interdependent Origination* has remained largely unchanged although the introduction has been considerably expanded. In the case of N@g@rjuna's *The Good Hearted Letter* the translation has been revised at many places and the commentary completely rewritten.

N@g@rjuna declares that the Two Truths, the conventional and the ultimate, represent the profound Truth of Buddhism. The conventional truth is constituted by the practice of the path in conformity with the laws of cause and effect. The ultimate truth is none other than Emptiness. The four texts included in this book therefore represent the whole gamut of N@g@rjuna's Wisdom from the first practical steps to be taken on the path to Enlightenment to the final ending of all stress and bondage. N@g@rjuna's *The Good Hearted letter* has been used for centuries in India, Tibet and Mongolia as a basic manual of instruction for following the Buddhist way of life. In *The Heart of Interdependent Origination* N@g@rjuna

[4] *Yukti&a&tik@*

explains the key Buddhist concepts of interdependent origination, not-self and rebirth, while in *Reasoning: The Sixty Stanzas* and *Emptiness: The Seventy Stanzas* he expounds the profound truth of Emptiness.

Justification

In the past twenty five years many books have appeared on the subject of N@g@rjuna's Philosophy. New English translations of many of his texts have also appeared. Indeed, it could be said that specially in the past few years N@g@rjuna has become a favorite topic for scholars from many fields within and without Buddhist Studies. Under these circumstances, it would seem correct to ask what is the justification for the publication of another book of translations of N@g@rjuna's works. In the case of this particular book, the question obviously requires an answer in the light of the fact that translations of the texts included here have appeared elsewhere, most evidently in Prof. C. Lidtner's *Nagarjuniana*.

Let me answer the question beginning first with the actual chronology of the translations. All of the translations which appear in this book were completed before the publication of Prof. Lidtner's book. When I learned of the publication of *Nagarjuniana*, I naturally procured a copy as soon as possible from its author and studied it carefully. I must admit that in some instances I amended my translations in the light of Prof. Lidtner's work. In many other instances, I decided to retain my own original rendering. The translations therefore although they are of the same texts treated by Prof. Lidtner were made independently. If we recall that several translations of the original Sanskrit texts were made by the Tibetans centuries ago, and that even now various translations exist in Tibetan in various editions of the *Ten Gyur*, it seems hardly necessary to observe that in our present state of knowledge of the Philosophy of N@g@rjuna, there is certainly room for several

translations of the same texts. This has indeed been shown to be the case, for we have already several translations of N@g@rjuna's *The Foundation Stanzas of the Middle Way*.[5]

In terms of the material covered by the translations, it has also to be pointed out that while Prof. Lidtner has translated *The Heart of Interdependent Origination, Reasoning: The Sixty Stanzas* and *Emptiness: The Seventy Stanzas*, no translations of the commentaries appear. This is a significant omission, because there exist auto-commentaries to the first and last of the above which supply much valuable information necessary for a proper understanding of the texts. In the case of *Reasoning: The Sixty Stanzas* too, the present book supplies extensive explanatory notes based on Candrak$rti's authoritative commentary, while other translations of the work do not. Consequently, I think it is fare to claim that the material presented in this book is substantially greater than that found in other available translations.

Again there are clearly different approaches to the translation and interpretation of Buddhist texts. Prof. Lidtner is a classical scholar in the European mold. However, there are other approaches which are equally appropriate to the study of N@g@rjuna's thought. One such approach is clearly that provided by the Indo-Tibetan tradition of Buddhist scholarship. Indeed, it might be suggested that such an indigenous tradition can provide a more reliable guide to N@g@rjuna's thought, precisely because it has been most closely concerned with the study and interpretation of the teaching of the Master.

Finally, in presenting the material, I have tried to limit the use of Sanskrit technical terms as far as possible. I do not expect my reader to be proficient in Sanskrit in order to understand the translations. I have tried to make the translations as readable as possible, and I have also avoided the use of extensive foot notes. In the final analysis, the wish to convey N@g@rjuna's message to my reader as clearly and simply as possible has taken precedence over other considerations. For the forgoing reasons, I believe this book

[5] *M#lamadhyamakak@rik@*

offers a valuable additional resource to the student of N@g@rjuna's thought.

Acknowledgements

First and foremost I would like to express my very special thanks to His Holiness Sakya Trizin for His wise and compassionate support throughout the preparation of these translations. In addition, many people have taken part in the realization of the translations included here. Above all, I have to extend my gratitude to Lobsang Jamspal who not only translated with me *The Heart of Interdependent Origination* and *Emptiness: The Seventy Stanzas* and their commentaries, but who also contributed his own extemporized translation of Candrak$rti's commentary to *Reasoning: The Sixty stanzas* with the help of which I prepared my explanatory notes to the text. I must also express my indebtedness to Ven. Khenpo Appy the first Prinsipal of the Sakya Institute of Higher Buddhist Studies in Rajpur, Dehra Dun, India for lending me his help and that of some of his ablest students in the course of the review and revision of the translations of *Emptiness: The Seventy Stanzas* and its commentary. Among the latter, I particularly want to recognize the contribution of Ven. Nyima Zangpo whose untimely death surely deprived the Tibetan community and the world at large of a gifted young scholar. I would also like to thank Ven. Jamyang Lekshe, a graduate of the Sakya Institute and presently Abbot of the Sakya Center, Rajpur, who translated with me *Reasoning: The Sixty Stanzas*.

Again, I would like to express my gratitude to my friends from the Sakya centers in Minnesota, in the United States and in Canberra and Sydney in Australia for their generous finincial contributions to the project. I am also specially grateful to Ven. B. Dhammaratana Thera and the Buddhist Research Society of Singapore for undertaking the publication of this book. Finally, Last but certainly not least, I would like to express my immense

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Peter Della Santina
Singapore, January 2002

Part One
The Good Hearted Letter

Section One

An Introduction to Nagarjuna's The Good Hearted Letter

[c@rya N@g@rjuna holds an almost unequaled place among the ranks of those Buddhist saints who expounded the teaching of the Buddha /@kyamuni for the benefit of the world. [c@rya N@g@rjuna revolutionized the interpretation of the doctrine of the Enlightened One which was current at his time and lent it a vitality and dynamism which has continued to sustain it even to our day among the votaries of the Mah@y@na. The revolution which [c@rya N@g@rjuna accomplished within the fold of Buddhism was not a radical departure from the original doctrine of the Buddha /@kyamuni. On the contrary, the adherents of the *Madhyamaka* school are undoubtedly justified in asserting that their interpretation represents the true import of the doctrine of the Buddha and the essence of Buddhism.

Given the majesty of [c@rya N@g@rjuna's name and the importance of the role which he played in the development of Buddhist thought, it is not surprising that the story of his life and achievements should partake of the fabulous and the legendary. In recounting the life of the [c@rya, his biographers have invariably included elements which are difficult to establish historically. While an English translation of one of the many biographies of [c@rya N@g@rjuna which are extant in the Tibetan language is certainly desirable, it is a task of no small magnitude. Hence for the purpose of introduction to this present work we have chosen to confine ourselves to a brief account of the life of the [c@rya based upon facts which can be established with relative certainty, drawing upon the

accounts of the traditional biographers only in so far as they do not contradict these facts.

[c@rya N@g@rjuna lived sometime during the last quarter of the first century C.E. and the first quarter of the second century C.E. This is evident from his acknowledged friendship with a king of the /atav@hana line of Andhra. The king, Gautam$putra /@takar%i, son of queen Bala /r$, was the only one of his line to embrace Buddhism, and it was for him that [c@rya N@g@rjuna wrote *The Good Hearted Letter* (*Suh=llekha*) *and The Jewel Garland* (*Ratn@val$*). That the king in question reigned at about the time indicated is certain from the evidence of present archaeological discoveries.[1] The traditional biographers agree that the [c@rya was born in a *brahmin* family of South India. The Tibetan accounts state that at his birth, astrologers prophesied that the child would not live beyond the age of seven. Unable to bear the sight of his premature death, the accounts tell us, his parents sent the boy to a Buddhist monastery, where by reciting the *Aparamit@yudh@ra%i* - he succeeded in escaping his fate. The account given by Kum@raj$va of [c@rya N@g@rjuna's early life differ substantially from that of the Tibetan biographers. Kum@raj$va writes that in his youth [c@rya N@g@rjuna was overcome with lust and through the art of invisibility seduced women in the royal palace. Once, however, he narrowly escaped death at the hands of the guards, an experience which led him to dwell upon the Buddha's teaching that desire is the foremost cause of suffering. As a result, according to Kum@raj$va, the [c@rya entered the Buddhist Order. Thereafter, the Tibetan accounts state, N@g@rjuna became a student of R@hulabhadra[2] who was then the abbot of the great university at N@land@.

Virtually all the traditional biographers agree that [c@rya N@g@rjuna procured some *Praj~@p@ramit@ S#tras* from the world of the *N@gas*. Finally, [c@rya N@g@rjuna seems to have spent the latter part of his life at the monastery built for him by his friend and patron, King Gautam$putra at /r$ Parvata. Although the accounts given of the manner of the [c@rya's death differ with regard to

detail, they agree in that N@g@rjuna consented to his own death at the hands of the son of King Gautam$putra.

[c@rya N@g@rjuna was an accomplished master of Buddhist doctrine. He wrote voluminously on almost every aspect of Buddhist philosophy and religion. Although [c@rya N@g@rjuna has rightly won widespread acclaim as the foremost exponent of the 'middle way', or *Madhyamapratipad*, and as a master of dialectic, his writings also include works on Vinaya, on Tantra, on the career of the Bodhisattva, and on the practice of the P@ramit@y@na. Among the latter are counted the *S#trasamuccaya* and others. [c@rya N@g@rjuna also wrote works of a highly devotional character, such as the *Catu*stava*.

The Goodhearted Letter of [c@rya N@g@rjuna is a concise and comprehensive summery of Buddhist teaching. It can generally be said to belong to a class of texts which later came to be called, in Tibet, those of the "Graduated Path". The works of N@g@rjuna, most especially the *S#trasamuccaya* but also to a lesser degree *The Good Hearted Letter*, were the forerunners of a multitude of texts which can be classed under the name of the "Graduated Path". They include such works as the */ik&@samuccaya* of /@ntideva, *The Jewel Ornament of Liberation* of Sgam-po-pa and *The Clarification of the Sage's Intent* of Sakya Pandita. It is not surprising that the concise style and comprehensive content of a work like N@g@rjuna's *The Good Hearted Letter* should have rendered it so popular as a vehicle for conveying in brief the teaching of Buddhism. That *The Good Hearted Letter* enjoyed such popularity even in India is evident from the account of the Chinese pilgrim I-Tsing who visited India in the seventh century, for he writes, "In India, students learn this letter in verse early in the course of instruction, but the most devout make it their special object of study throughout their lives."[3] Today, also *The Good Hearted Letter* enjoys widespread popularity among Tibetans who use it with regularity as a basic manual for teaching Buddhism. Hence, its English translation cannot help but be of use to those modern readers who wish to gain a basic grasp of the practice of Buddhism. The comprehensive character of the work, though short, makes it highly suitable for use as an introduction to

the whole of Buddhism. Since it was written principally for lay people, addressed as it was to the King with whom N@g@rjuna shared a lifelong friendship, the teachings it contains can be appreciated by a wide spectrum of readers with varying interests. Those who desire a concise and comprehensive manual of instruction in the theory and practice of Buddhism will surely not be disappointed by it.

Though *The Goodhearted Letter* contains a few elements which belong specifically to the Mah@y@na tradition, most of its contents comprise a common foundation which is shared by all the Buddhist schools. The letter begins with an invocation to cultivate faith in that which is pre-eminent and exalted such as the Buddha, Dharma and Sa`gha. There follows a lengthy summery of ethical and religious precepts which, if adhered to, result in rebirth in the fortunate realms of men and gods, as [c@rya N@g@rjuna writes "...Morality is said to be the foundation of all virtues, just as the earth is (the support of both) animate and inanimate things". The injunctions and prohibitions set forth in the text are accompanied by practices which are to be used to counteract non-virtuous propensities. Of equal importance is the portion of the text designed to remove erroneous views produced from ignorance, for morality practiced in ignorance does not result in liberation. However, through the combination of morality and wisdom, liberation is won.

Death, impermanence and the opportune conditions form the subject matter of the subsequent verses of the text. Since life is transient like a bubble of water caught by the wind, N@g@rjuna encourages the reader to strive for liberation without delay. If this human birth is not properly used, then one will continue to experience the sufferings of the six realms of Sa`s@ra which are then described by the author. Such descriptions are commonly found in texts of this kind. They are designed to produce a revulsion for existence in the world and a desire for liberation. Since the highest goal of freedom and enlightenment cannot be achieved unless and until attachment to the world is relinquished, the detailed descriptions of the manifold sufferings experienced are necessary in order to produce renunciation. It should be remembered that the

'truth of suffering' is the first of the Four Noble Truths and the very cornerstone of the Buddhist religion.

[c@rya N@g@rjuna's letter concludes with a description of the path and the unequaled result to be gained through its practice. Morality, concentration and the wisdom arising from the understanding of the precious doctrine of Interdependent Origination comprise the path resulting in the exalted state of a Bodhisattva or Buddha.

[c@rya N@g@rjuna's *The Good Hearted Letter* provides the aspirant who wishes to be acquainted with the essentials of the Buddhist path to liberation with a comprehensive summary of the principles of the Buddhist religion. The foundation of correct moral conduct and right understanding of the truth free from the obscurations of ignorance results in a transcendent mode of being in which not only is freedom from bondage and ignorance achieved, but also the capacity to nurture and mature all living beings that they may also attain enlightenment.

Section Two

The Good Hearted Letter with Explanatory Notes

I. O righteous and worthy one endowed with virtues, it is fitting you hear these few Noble verses which I have composed so that you may aspire to the merit which arises from the *Sugata's*[1] words.

[c@rya N@g@rjuna begins his letter to the King by urging him, to pay careful attention to the teaching contained in this message as it concerns the holy Dharma. The Dharma if practiced properly will lead first to happiness and prosperity and then eventually to liberation. Therefore, it is well worth the attention of the King notwithstanding his busy schedule.

II. For example, an image of the *Sugata*, if it be made of wood or whatever it be like, is worshipped by wise men. Likewise though this poem of mine lacks grace, do not despise it since it is based upon a discussion of the holy Dharma.

Do not disregard these words even though they may not be beautiful, because they contain a very important message. For, wise men worship an image of the Buddha whether it be made of gold, stone, wood or clay, whether it be beautiful or unattractive, or whether it be valuable or not.

III. However much of the Great Sage's words you may have listened to and may have even comprehended, still is not a

white-painted (mansion) made whiter by the midnight moon?

This letter is worthy of study even by the person who is familiar with the teaching of the Buddha in order to clarify his understanding still further. This is even true for one who, like the king, knows and practises the Buddha's teaching.

IV. You should bring to mind the six objects of recollection: the Enlightened One, His Teaching, the Noble Assembly, giving, morality, and gods; the heap of qualities of each of these were well-taught by the Conqueror.

Take refuge in the Triple Gem daily and remember the six objects of recollection just as they were taught by the Buddha.

V. Always practise the path of the ten virtuous deeds (performed) through body, voice and mind; refrain from alcohol, and also delight in a wholesome livelihood.

Avoid these ten non-virtuous actions: three of body- killing, stealing, sexual misconduct; four of voice- lying, slander, malicious speech, idle talk; three of mind- covetousness, malevolence and erroneous views.

VI. Knowing that wealth is unstable and devoid of essence, rightly bestow gifts upon monks, *br@hma%as*, the poor and friends; so for the next life there is no more excellent a kinsman than giving.

Give to monks and holy men because of their qualities; to parents, teachers and friends because of their kindness; and to hungry and sick people because of their need.

VII. You should practise morality which is unimpaired, blameless, not mixed and unsullied - for morality is said to

be the foundation of all virtues, just as the earth is (the support of both) animate and inanimate things.

Just as the earth is the basis of everything in the world, so morality is the foundation of all worldly and beyond worldly achievements. Morality is also essential for the subsequent development of concentration and wisdom, therefore cultivate it well.

VIII. Increase the measureless Perfections of giving, morality, patience, energy, meditation and wisdom, and thus become the Lord of Conquerors who has reached the further shore of the ocean of existence.

The six perfections (*p@ramit@)* are divided into two groups called the accumulation of merit which includes: giving, morality and patience and the accumulation of knowledge which includes: concentration and wisdom. Energy is included in both groups as it is needed for both accumulations.

The Bodhisattva, through the perfections of giving, morality, patience and energy dwells in happiness in the world. He has accumulated merit and has access to the Terrestrial body (*Nirm@%ak@ya*) and to the Celestial body (*Sambhogak@ya*) by means of which he fulfills the needs of living beings. Moreover, the Bodhisattva has attained knowledge by means of the perfections of energy, concentration and wisdom and therefore dwells in freedom. He has access to the Transcendental Body (*Dharmak@ya*) and is consequently not bound to the world.

IX. The race of one who worships father and mother is in the company of that of *Brahm@* and that of preceptors; through revering them one will win fame and later will attain the higher realms.

Respect your parents, because they have been kind to you in this life. Those who respect their parents are gentle and happy and will develop many good qualities in this life and in the next.

X. Forsake killing, theft, sexual misconduct, lying, alcohol, attachment to food at improper times, enjoyment of high seats and beds, and all kinds of songs, dances and garlands.

Although it is generally very difficult for lay people to observe these eight precepts, nonetheless, they should be observed occasionally, such as on the day commemorating the Buddha's Enlightenment. The benefit of observing these eight is shown in the following verse.

XI. If you possess these eight features which resemble an *Arhat's* morality, then, nourished by the religious vows, you will bestow on men and women the pleasant form of the gods of the realm of desire.

Observance of these special precepts will lay the foundation of the renunciation of an *Arhat* or otherwise to the happiness of higher realms such as those of the gods.

XII. Look upon these as enemies: miserliness, cunning, deceit, attachment to property, laziness, pride, sexual attachment, hatred, and arrogance of caste, form, learning, youth, and great power.

Avoid these thirteen faults of character that diminish your moral worth and are unbecoming. Although they apparently serve your own purpose, they are in fact inimical to your real interests.

XIII -XIV. The Sage said that heedfulness is the source of the deathless and heedlessness is the source of death ; hence to increase your virtue, devotedly remain heedful. One who has

formerly been heedless, but later becomes heedful - like Nanda, A<gulim@la, Aj@ta^atru and Udayana - will also be resplendent like the moon free from clouds.

Even if you have done non-virtuous acts in the past, that should not stop you from becoming mindful now and changing your ways. For example, Nanda who was obsessed by sexual desire, A<gulim@la who was addicted to violence, Aj@ta^atru who killed his father, and Udayana who killed his mother, had all done unvirtuous actions and had little inclination to become better. However, their stories prove that anyone can change.

XV. Since there is no penance like patience, you must give anger no opportunity to arise. The Buddha said that by giving up anger, one will attain the irreversible stage.

The practice of austerities and extreme forms of asceticism are not conducive to gaining happiness and freedom. Inflicting pain upon the body in various ways, eating poor food or starving oneself, wearing rags and the like cannot even guarantee a higher rebirth, let alone liberation. The greatest penance is patience, so do not give way to anger even when unwanted events occur, but practice patience instead.

XVI. "I was abused by these (people), bound by them, defeated by them, they have snatched away my property". Thus harboring enmity produces quarrels, but one who gives up harboring enmity sleeps happily.

Abandon resentment even towards those who have caused one harm. Harboring enmity in this fashion only provokes further conflict and causes more suffering thereby adding to the harm already done. Consequently, give up such ways of thinking and sleep peacefully.

XVII. Recognize the mind to be like a drawing made on water, earth or stone; The first among these is excellent for those possessing the afflictions, and the last for those who desire religion.

The mind's nature is to retain ideas for different lengths of time, just as writing on water, earth or stone endures for a short, middling or long time respectively. Strive to let go of unwholesome ways of thinking quickly as if they were written on water, while retaining wholesome attitudes as if they were written on stone.

XVIII. The Conqueror declared that pleasant, truthful and wrong are the three kinds of speech possessed by people - such words are like honey, flowers and filth. Abandon the last of these.

Pleasant speech makes others happy because it is sweet like honey. Truthful speech is beautiful like a flower and moreover, it is beneficial to others. On the other hand, wrong speech is unwholesome like excrement. Cultivate the first two forms of speech and avoid the last.

XIX. Four categories of persons are seen (who move) from: light to great light, dark to great dark, light to great dark, and dark to great light; be the first among these.

(i) Light to great light: someone who has acted virtuously in the past and therefore enjoys fortunate circumstances now, and who continues to act virtuously in the present life.
(ii) Dark to great dark: someone born in states of woe because of unwholesome acts done in the past, and who continues to act unvirtuously in the present life.
(iii) Light to great dark: someone who enjoys fortunate circumstances now because of merit collected in the past, but acts non-virtuously in the present and consequently falls into unfortunate states.

(iv) Dark to great light: someone who although born in less fortunate circumstances, nonetheless applies himself and performs virtuous acts leading to birth in happier states.

XX. Persons should be understood to be like mango fruits which are: unripened yet seemingly ripened, ripened but seemingly unripened, unripened and appearing to be unripened, and ripened ones which also appear to be ripened.

Examine the character of people before accepting them as friends or associates. People may be likened to mangos in the following way.

(i) Their intentions are not good, but their actions are good.
(ii) Their intentions are good, but their actions are not good.
(iii) Neither their intentions nor their actions are good.
(iv) Both their intentions and their actions are good.

Strive to be of the last type and to have friends with a similar character.

XXI. Do not look upon another's wife; however, should you see her, think of her according to her age - thus as mother, daughter or sister. If lust persists, then meditate well on impurity.

Control the afflictions by being watchful of your mind. Don't hanker after others' wives. Remember the evil consequences of desire in this life and the next. Overcome desire for the wives of others' by regarding them according to their age as mother, daughter or sister. Meditate on impermanence and impurity if you are still unable to abandon lust for the wives of others'.

XXII. Protect the unsteady mind just as (you would protect) learning, a son, a treasure, or life; withdraw the mind from sensual pleasures just as (you would withdraw) from a vicious (serpent), poison, a weapon, an enemy or fire.

Your mind is the most valuable thing you possess. The mind can make you happy or miserable according to how you treat it. If you owned a valuable house, car or painting, you would take good care of it and do your best to keep it from being damaged. If you have children, you know how careful you are to protect them and keep them out of harm's way. The same applies to your mind, therefore take good care of your mind and do not let it get entangled in harmful distractions and unwholesome ways.

XXIII. The Lord of Conquerors declared desires to be like the *kimbu* fruit, for they are the cause of misery; since these iron chains bind worldly people in the prison of Sa ` s@ra, renounce them.

The careless pursuit of pleasure only creates trouble in the long run. At first, worldly pleasures, like the *kimbu* fruit appear to be attractive and enjoyable, but once you have become addicted to them, you find that they are poisonous and lead to disaster.

XXIV. (In choosing) between the one who conquers (attachment to) the ever unsteady and momentary objects of the six sense- organs and the one who conquers the enemy's army in battle, the wise know the first to be a far greater hero.

Do not allow your senses to become entangled in the afflictions. If you fight the afflictions by avoiding objects that inflame them, then, you have won the battle. If you can succeed in this, then you are more heroic than a victor on the battle field.

XXV. Look upon the body of a young woman apart from ornaments (and clothing) like a totally impure vessel covered with skin, difficult to satisfy, bad smelling, and with impurities issuing from the nine (bodily) doors.

Consider the remedy for the desire for others. Although a man or woman may appear beautiful, reflect on impurity. The body of a man or woman is just a heap of flesh, bones, blood, and the like. Therefore such a body is really similar to a beautiful vase filled with impurities.

XXVI. Know that just as the insect - ridden leper wholly depends on fire for the sake of happiness, similarly clinging to desires will bring no peace.

The more you indulge in worldly pleasures, the more you want them. You are like a thirsty man who drinks salt water which only increases your thirst. Therefore try to free your mind from desire for the pleasures of the world, because they only lead to more suffering in the long run.

XXVII. Be skilled in rightly perceiving things with the understanding of the Ultimate (Truth), for there is no other practice possessing comparable quality.

Examine all factors of existence. Whether you search among the aggregates of the personality or among the objects found in the world at large, not a single atom really exists. Meditate on emptiness to destroy the afflictions and purify Karma.

XXVIII. The person possessing high caste, beautiful form and learning is not respected if he lacks wisdom and morality; however, one who possesses these two qualities, even though lacking the other qualities, is worshipped.

A person is not considered worthy of worship, just because he comes from a good family, is wealthy, famous or even learned. Only the person who possesses wisdom and morality is worthy of worship.

XXIX. O knower of the world, the eight worldly *dharmas* - gain, loss, happiness, unhappiness, fame, notoriety, praise

and blame - should be regarded equally as (they) are not worthy of your mind.

Of the 'eight worldly *dharmas'*, the four which ordinary people hope for are:
(i) gain,
(ii) happiness,
(iii) fame,
(iv) praise.
Upon obtaining any of these four, people become overjoyed.
The four which people fear are:
(i) loss,
(ii) suffering,
(iii) notoriety,
(iv) blame.

When these four occur, people become down hearted. However this attitude is not recommended for someone wishing to practise religion. On the contrary, such a person ought to regard the eight with equanimity.

XXX. Do not commit sins for the sake of *br@hma%as*, monks, gods, guests, parents, sons, queen, or attendants, because there is not anyone to share the result of hell.

Avoid collecting unwholesome actions for your own ends or for the sake of others, no matter whether they be preceptors, gods, relatives or consorts. Even though an unwholesome action may be done for another, its consequences are still borne by you and not by anyone else.

XXXI. Though some unwholesome deeds performed will not wound you immediately like a weapon, still any effect (arising) from those unwholesome actions will become manifest when the time of death befalls.

Immediate retribution may not be experienced, but eventually the effects of unwholesome acts will appear. Such effects may appear within this very life, however, should they fail to appear in this life time, they will surely appear after death. If they should still fail to appear even in the next life, nonetheless, rest assured that they will manifest themselves after several life times. No wholesome or unwholesome action is ever lost, but is certain to produce its effect.

XXXII. The Sage said that faith, morality, giving, study, modesty, humility, and wisdom are the seven unblemished properties; recognize other common properties to be meaningless.

These seven virtues are very beneficial. Although you may not be rich in gold and silver, still if you possess these seven, you have something of far greater value, the best among all possible treasures. Besides, the seven are conditions conducive to attaining the supreme happiness of Nirv@%a.

XXXIII. Abandon these six which result in loss of fame and birth in evil states: gambling, participation in fairs, laziness, association with sinful friends, alcohol, and walking in the night.

The six patterns of behavior which can destroy the 'seven noble wealths' are:
(i) gambling,
(ii) attendance at fairs,
(iii) laziness,
(iv) association with non-virtuous friends who contribute to one's bad habits,
(v) drinking alcohol, and
(vi) roaming around in the night without any reason.

These six forms of behavior will be a cause for one to lose ones good name in this life, as well as a cause for rebirth into lower realms.

XXXIV. The Preceptor of gods and men said that satisfaction is the most excellent among all riches, so always be satisfied; if content through possessing no wealth, one is truly rich.

Always be satisfied with whatever you have. Greed will always cause dissatisfaction and unhappiness. Moreover, stress will occur from the desire to acquire more wealth, protect and eventually loose it. Even if a person be poor, if he is content with what he has, then he possesses the greatest happiness.

XXXV. O gracious king, just as the most excellent of *N@gas* suffers in accordance with the number of heads he has acquired, just so one suffers in accordance with the number of possessions acquired; however, it is not so for one with few desires.

You will suffer in proportion to the amount of superfluous possessions you acquire. This truth is exemplified by the *N@ga*[2] kings who suffer in accordance with the number of heads they possess. Therefore, be watchful of your inclinations to acquire more possessions.

XXXVI-XXXVII. Avoid these three kinds of wives: one who, like an executioner, is naturally associated with the enemy; one who, like a queen, disrespects the husband; and one who, like a thief, steals even small things. (The type of wife) to revere as a family deity is the one who is kind like a sister, one who is dear like a friend, one who wishes your benefit like a mother, or one who is subject to you like a servant.

N@g@rjuna gives this advice to his patron, the King, to help him choose a wife wisely.

XXXVIII. Understanding food to be like medicine, neither use it with hatred, nor attachment, nor for might, pride or beauty, but solely for maintaining the body.

Keeping in mind that food is only medicine for the illness of hunger, always eat moderately. Avoid eating with attachment or aversion towards the food. Eat simply for the purpose of sustaining the body so as to be able to practise the Dharma.

XXXIX. O righteous one, after (usefully) spending the whole day and the beginning and end of the night, mindfully sleep only in the middle (watch), so even the time of sleep will not be fruitless.

With a great revulsion for Sa`s@ra, strive constantly for enlightenment. Waste neither day nor night, but use all of your time for practising the path leading to liberation. Sleep in the middle watch of the night with the thought of making sleep too a part of the path.

XL. Always meditate rightly on love, compassion, joy, and equanimity; even if the supreme (state) is not gained in this way, still the happiness of the world of *Brahm@* will be attained.

The limitless or immeasurable meditations include the following:
(i) Love, the wish for all sentient beings to be happy and to have the cause of happiness:
(ii) Compassion, the wish for all sentient beings to be free from suffering and the cause of suffering;
(iii) Joy, the wish for all sentient beings to experience the joy that is free from sorrow;
(iv) Equanimity, the wish that all sentient beings dwell in equanimity, free from attachment towards near ones and aversion

towards far. The causes of happiness and suffering are wholesome and unwholesome actions respectively.

XLI. Having given up the pleasures, joys and sufferings of the realm of desire by means of the four concentrations, the fortunate levels of the gods - *Brahm@, [bh@svara, Subhak=tsna* and *B=hatphala* - will be obtained.

By means of the five factors of absorption: initial application, sustained application, interest, happiness and one-pointedness, one ascends the four levels of concentration and transcends the realm of desire. The application of the five factors enable you to progressively eliminate the five hindrances: sloth and torpor, doubt, aversion, restlessness and worry and attachment.

XLII. From the foundation of these five great factors- persistence, intention, unopposed, endowed with qualities, and beneficiaries- virtuous and non-virtuous deeds arise (in great measure); therefore, strive to do virtuous actions.

The five conditions that modify the weight of Karma are the following:
(i) persistence, actions done repeatedly over a long period of time;
(ii) intention, actions done with great will or determination;
(iii) unopposed, actions done without any hesitation, doubt or regret;
(iv) endowed with qualities, actions done for persons or things endowed with special qualities such as the Triple Gem;
(v) beneficiaries, actions done for benefactors, such as parents and religious teachers;

Actions done modified by any or all of these five conditions are the foundation of the accumulation of virtue and non-virtue in great measure.

XLIII. Understand that a small measure of salt changes the taste of a little water while not that of the Ganges River;

similarly, a small unwholesome deed (will not spoil) a vast root of virtue.

Avoid non-virtuous actions and do as many important virtuous ones as possible. A small measure of salt in a little water gives the water a salty taste, but the same measure of salt cannot change the taste of a great river. Similarly, small non-virtuous deeds cannot be made innocuous by a small amount of virtue, while the same small non-virtuous acts are made negligible by great virtuous actions.

XLIV. Be aware that these five hindrances are thieves which steal the wealth of virtue : restlessness and worry, aversion, sloth and torpor, attachment, and doubt.

The five hindrances are:
(i) Restlessness and worry, preoccupied with worldly matters, one is distracted by restlessness and worry.
(ii) Aversion, ill-will towards ones enemies and distaste for the practice of the Dharma;
(iii) Sloth and torpor, heaviness of body and mind, and no interest in virtue.
(iv) Attachment, lust and greed for material objects and sensory stimulation;
(v) Doubt, vacillation of mind and uncertainty regarding the Triple Gem and the law of Karma.

These five are hindrances upon the path to liberation.

XLV. Assiduously perform the five most excellent practices - faith, energy, mindfulness, concentration and wisdom. These are called strength, power, and also the attained summit.

The five factors leading to spiritual progress are:
(i) Faith, confidence in the Triple Gem, the law of Karma and the possibility of liberation;

(ii) Energy, effort and enthusiasm for the practice;
(iii) Mindfulness, observation and recognition of mental states enabling you to maintain your equilibrium on the path;
(iv) Concentration, one-pointedness of mind free from distraction;
(v) Wisdom, understanding the real nature of the personality and of phenomena.

The five factors are known either as faculties or as powers depending on the degree of their development. Initially, the five are called faculties and may be likened to the sense organs since they enable you to apprehend reality. Later, when they become fully developed, they are called powers, because they then become unshakable. The transformation of the factors from faculties to powers indicates the passage of a practitioner from the level of an ordinary person to the level of an extraordinary one on the threshold of supra mundane being.

XLVI. "Thus actions done by oneself (are the cause) of not passing beyond disease, old age, death and separation from the dear." Arrogance will not arise by means of the corrective of this repeated thought.

Create the conditions for destroying the afflictions. To accomplish this, calm and insight are necessary. Remember that you are always subject to the suffering of disease, old age and death. Remember too that any virtuous or non - virtuous action done will affect you alone. By recollecting this again and again, generate the remedy for the afflictions.

XLVII. Follow the right view if heaven and liberation are desired, for even persons doing meritorious deeds through the wrong view will have all awful consequences.

To obtain a higher birth in a future life, or to attain liberation, the foundation of all the highest qualities which is "right view" must be developed. The law of Karma, the 'right conventional view' and the Emptiness of all *dharmas*, the 'right ultimate view'

have to be understood. Otherwise, awful consequences will follow even though merit has been accumulated.

XLVIII. Know that in reality human beings are unhappy, impermanent, devoid of self, and impure; those who forsake mindfulness are ruined through wrongly viewing these four.

If you examine carefully the nature of the human condition, you will see that people are usually dissatisfied and discontented. You will observe the following four:
(i) suffering,
(ii) impermanence,
(iii) impersonality or not-self,
(iv) impurity.

If you think the opposite, then you hold the four wrong views. Therefore, never allow mindfulness to leave the doorway of the mind. If it should, recollect and earnestly meditate upon the miseries of the states of woe.

XLIX. Thus it has been said: "The form is not the self, the self does not possess the form, the self does not dwell in the form, and the form does not dwell in the self", in this manner also understand the four remaining aggregates as empty.

(i) The form or the physical body is not the self or the soul, because when the form perishes, then the self would also perish. Therefore, the form is not the self.
(ii) The form is not owned by the self. The self does not own the form, because the body acts of its own accord or as the result of various factors even against the will of the self.
(iii) The self does not dwell in the form. Examine the body, and you will not find the self anywhere within the physical form.
(iv) The form does not abide in the self. If you think the form dwells in the self, then you will first have to find the self in which the form might dwell, but nowhere can you find the self. In addition, the self would then have to be different from the form, but nowhere apart

from the form and the other aggregates can it be found. The same analysis can be applied to the remaining mental aggregates.

L. Know that the aggregates originated neither from chance, time, nature, intrinsic being, God, nor without cause, but from ignorant deeds and craving.

The aggregates or the psycho-physical personality did not originate from God, chance, time or any such erroneous causes. however, they also did not originate without a cause, otherwise they would always exist or not.

Karma accumulated through ignorance and the other afflictions are the causes of the appearance of the aggregates. Ignorance is the soil that allows the seeds of craving and the like to grow, thereby leading to repeated rebirth in Sa ` s@ra.

LI. Understand these three to be fetters (to Sa ` s@ra) and obstacles to the gates of the city of liberation: adhering solely to morality and asceticism, the mistaken view of real individuality and doubt.

These three fetters are fundamental obstacles to liberation.

(i) Adhering solely to morality and asceticism refers to the belief that mere observance of moral precepts and the practice of austerities is sufficient to achieve liberation.

(ii) Belief in real individuality refers to the view that persons and objects have true substantial existence.

(iii) Doubt refers to absence of confidence regarding the goal of the religious path, the Triple Gem and the Law of Karma.

The three fetters are the first obstacles to be overcome in achieving the status of a Stream Winner or Noble Person.

LII. Since liberation depends upon oneself and not on any help from others, cultivate the fourfold truth through possessing study, morality and concentration.

Achieving liberation depends upon you alone. Free your mind from the afflictions by nurturing study, morality and concentration. Study the teaching of the Buddha, particularly the Four Noble Truths. Observe the moral code and develop concentration of mind in order to understand directly the Four Noble Truths of Suffering and so forth.

(i) Understand Suffering;
(ii) Abandon the Cause of Suffering, that is Craving;
(iii) Experience the End of Suffering or Nirv@%a;
(iv) Practice the Noble Eightfold Path.

LIII. Always be disciplined in the highest morality, highest wisdom and highest absorption; more than one hundred and fifty disciplines[3] are verily included within these three.

Study well the three divisions of practice.

(i) morality, is the subject of the Vinaya the guide book of moral conduct; different codes of conduct apply to different people such as lay people and monks.
(ii) wisdom, is the subject of the Abhidharma, the books of psychology and philosophy; all factors are devoid of self and substance; understand that, in reality, everything is without a self and empty.
(iii) absorption, is the subject of the S#tra, the discourses in which the practice of meditation and the means of gaining higher states of concentration is explained.

All the practices needed to tread the path to liberation are included in these three categories.

LIV. O lord, mindfulness regarding the body was taught to be the only path (to liberation) by the *Sugata*. Since the loss of mindfulness will destroy all virtues, guard it well through steadfastness.

Maintain mindfulness when performing any bodily action, whether sitting, standing, walking or lying down. All the Buddhas

have stressed the importance of mindfulness. Therefore, mindfulness is the foundation of all progress upon the path to liberation.

LV. Life is impermanent since (it is beset by) many misfortunes like a bubble of water caught by the wind; that one inhales after exhaling and awakens from sleep is wonderful.

Recollect impermanence and death in order to remain mindful. Attachment to one's life and body is inappropriate, because life is impermanent and the body is insubstantial. There are many internal and external factors which can cause death, such as diseases, disorders, accidents and attacks from enemies.

LVI. Know that the insubstantial body at the end - becoming ashes, dried, putrid or foul - will be completely destroyed and despoiled (and) its constituents dispersed.

Remember that one day your own body will be buried, burned, dismembered or the like. Therefore, there is no cause to be attached to this particular body.

LVII. Since not even ash will remain as all things - the earth, Mount Sumeru and the ocean - will be consumed by the flames of the seven suns,[4] what need to say anything of very frail men.

Even immense and enduring phenomena like mountains, rivers, oceans, continents, the earth, planets and stars arise and perish. Everything is impermanent, so your frail and fragile body will certainly be destroyed.

LVIII. O best of men, since everything is impermanent, devoid of self, refugeless, protectorless, and homeless, free

your mind from Sa ` s@ra which is like the pithless plantain tree.

Just as your own body is impermanent, so also the whole universe is impermanent. The wheel of cyclical existence continually goes round and round, without substance, soul or prospect of betterment. Therefore resolve to renounce the world.

LIX. O lord of men, make this (human life) fruitful by practising the Holy Dharma, for it is more difficult to obtain a human birth from animal states than for a tortoise to place (its neck) in the opening in a wooden yoke present in the same ocean.

Think of how difficult it is to obtain a human birth and how rare the eighteen opportune conditions[5] needed for the practice of the Dharma are.

Imagine that the universe is an ocean on the surface of which is a wooden yoke blown about by the wind and tossed by the waves. And, imagine that on the bottom of this ocean lives a blind tortoise that once every one hundred years comes to the surface. It is even more difficult to obtain a human birth than it is for the blind tortoise to place its neck through the opening in the yoke.

There is no example adequate to illustrate the difficulty of obtaining a human birth together with the eighteen opportune conditions. Therefore do not waste this human life, but use it to practice the Dharma.

LX. Having obtained a human birth, one who commits unwholesome actions is more foolish than one who fills a jewel adorned golden vase with vomit.

There is no greater fool than one who fails to take advantage of a human life to practice the Dharma and to strive for liberation.

LXI. You possess the four great conditions: dwelling in a suitable place, relying upon the Holy Ones, having religiously applied yourself in former (lives), and collected merit.

In addition to human life and the eighteen opportune conditions, there are also four other special conditions:
(i) birth in a good family which facilitates entry into the noble path;
(ii) access to holy persons who can assist you to practice;
(iii) freedom from the necessity to work for your daily maintenance;
(iv) accumulation of merit in the past that has brought you human life, the opportune conditions and the preceding three special conditions.

LXII. The Sage said that reliance upon a spiritual friend completes the path to holiness. Since very many (people) obtained peace through relying upon the Conqueror, rely upon the Holy Ones.

The Buddha said that a virtuous friend is the cause of gaining the path to happiness and freedom. Therefore, consult such a friend before making any important decision.

LXIII. - LXIV. Whoever is born as a heretic, animal, hungry ghost, hell being, barbarian, fool, long-lived deity or where there is no teaching from a Buddha, is declared to be born in the eight faulty and unfavorable (states). Having gotten the opportunity to be free from them, then strive to put an end to birth.

You enjoy the great good fortune not to be hampered by conditions inimical to the Dharma, therefore take up the practice of the path without further delay. Renounce Sa`s@ra which is impermanent, and insubstantial, and abandon the fruitless pursuit of worldly ends.

LXV. Grieve over Sa ` s@ra which is the source of manifold suffering, such as destitution of (what is) desired, death, disease, old age, etc., and also listen to some of its faults.

Remember the unsatisfactory nature of Sa ` s@ra. People suffer because they cannot get the things they want. On the contrary, all sorts of unwanted things happen to them. Even if people are lucky enough to enjoy a relatively happy life, they will eventually have to part from the persons and things they love. Consequently, suffering cannot in any case be avoided in Sa ` s@ra. Therefore cultivate renunciation by meditating upon the unsatisfactory nature of Sa ` s@ra.

LXVI. There are no certainties in Sa ` s@ra, because fathers become sons, mothers wives, and enemies friends; likewise, it can happen conversely.

Everything in Sa ` s@ra is uncertain and impermanent. In successive life- times your son may become your father, and your father may become your son; your enemies may become your friends, and your friends may become your enemies. Therefore abandon aversion towards enemies and attachment towards friends.

Do not make distinctions among living beings, for at one moment, a person may be a friend, and at the next, he may be an enemy.

LXVII. Everyone has drunk more (mothers') milk than the four oceans; since worldlings follow after the common herd, they will have to drink still more than this.

Having enjoyed some of the pleasure of existence, you want more of it and are never satisfied. Everyone has been in Sa ` s@ra since beginningless time and has drunk more mothers' milk than the water in the four oceans. Now, if you do not follow the path to liberation, but continue to follow the ways of foolish common people

bewildered by the darkness of ignorance, then you will have to drink still more mothers' milk in the future.

LXVIII. Everyone has had a heap of bones so great as to equal or surpass *Mount Sumeru*; also, the earth would not suffice to count pellets as big as the seeds of the Juniper tree to equal the mothers (one has had).

Think of the number of times you have died. If each living being were to collect all the bones he has had from his past births, then the heap of bones would surpass even *Mount Sumeru*. So how many more bones will you collect if you do not follow the path to liberation.

Think too of the number of times you have been born. If you were to try to count the mothers you have had in the past, it would be impossible. Even if you were to make small pellets of soil, each as big as a juniper seed, the whole earth would not be enough.

LXIX. Having become *Indra*, deserving the reverence (of) the world, (one) will again fall to the earth on account of the force of (previous) deeds; even having become an universal monarch, (one) will become a servant of a servant in Sa ` s@ra.

Living beings transmigrate from higher states to lower ones. The king of the gods, *Indra*, is worshipped by the whole universe. But when his death occurs he will transmigrate to lower states - perhaps even to the hells - due to his previous bad actions. An universal monarch can also transmigrate into lower states, like that of a servant's servant. You can never be certain of your place in Sa ` s@ra.

LXX. Having long tasted the happiness of caressing the waists and breasts of the heavenly maidens, once again the very terrible touch of the devices which crush and cut (one's) organs in hell will have to be endured.

You can never trust the pleasures of Sa ` s@ra. You can be born in heaven where you enjoy various pleasures: the divine flowers and scents, and the beautiful goddesses. However, as a result of past actions you can then be reborn in the burning hells where you are tortured by heated irons.

Therefore, no pleasure in the world lasts forever, and so it cannot be depended upon, because you can be born into the hells at any time.

LXXI. Having long dwelt at the summit of Mount Sumeru (where one's) feet encounter a comfortable and compliant (surface), consider that again the terrible misery of walking in burning embers and upon decomposed corpses will be experienced.

You cannot depend upon the pleasure which results from particular places. You can be born in heaven in a jeweled palace where the ground is composed of gems and you walk in the luxury of softness. All of your wishes are fulfilled. However, the very enjoyments derived from these surroundings can result in birth in the hells where you will have to endure various terrible sufferings. Therefore, you cannot depend upon anything in Sa ` s@ra, for you can find yourself anywhere within its realms.

LXXII. - LXXIII. Having reached the beautiful gardens and joyfully played with the heavenly maidens who attend (one), again (one's) feet, hands, ears and nose will be severed by the sword - like leaves that are in the gardens (of hell). Having entered the celestial maidens' *Mand@kin$* River which is beautiful and endowed with golden lotuses, once again the salty, difficult to bear and hot *Vaitara%$* River will have to be entered.

Do not rely upon the pleasure of the heavenly gardens. You can be born there, but again, you can be reborn in hell. In heaven,

you play in The Leisurely Flowing, *Mand@kin$* river, and enjoy the company of goddesses, yet you can be reborn in hell where The Unfordable, *Vaitara%$* river, is of molten iron.

LXXIV. - LXXV. Having obtained the very great happiness of the gods of the sphere of desire or the dispassionate happiness of *Brahm@*,[6] again the continuous suffering of having become fuel for *Av$ci's* fire will have to be endured. Having attained the state of the sun or moon and illuminated the whole world by the light of one's own body, once again having entered into the dense, black darkness one's own outstretched hand will not be seen.

Do not rely upon either the lower or higher heavenly pleasures. Born in the heavens you will enjoy more happiness and freedom than ordinary people because of your religious accomplishments in the past. Still, because of previous unwholesome actions you can be born in the worst of the hells, *Av$ci*.

LXXVI. (Since you) will have to suffer thus, take up the bright lamp of the threefold virtue; (otherwise), you alone will have to enter the endless darkness which is not destroyed by sun or moon.

Everything is impermanent, so you might die at any moment. When the time comes to die, you must go alone, without any help from relatives or friends. Therefore, if you have the chance to practise virtuous deeds of body, voice and mind, then do so at once.

LXXVII. Living beings who commit offences will always suffer in the hells: *Sa `j$va, K@las#tra, Prat@pana, Sa ` gh@ta, Raurava, Av$ci,* etc.

Whoever has committed cruel and violent actions through the three doors, that is, body, speech and mind) will be born in the eight hot hells:

(i) Reviving Hell, (ii) Black Thread Hell, (iii) Crushing Hell, (iv) Howling Hell, (v) Great Howling Hell, (vi) Hot Hell, (vii) Great Hot Hell, (viii) Unremitting Hot Hell.

In addition to the hot hells, there are also Cold Hells and Neighboring Hells. There, the sufferings are long and violent. Only a few examples are given of the many sufferings experienced in these hells.

LXXVIII. There some are pressed like sesamum; similarly, others are ground into fine powder; some are cut by saws; likewise, others are split by the very sharp blades of terrible axes.

LXXIX. While a burning stream of thick, molten bronze is poured into others, some are completely transfixed by heated barbed iron spears.

LXXX - LXXXI Some with hands outstretched towards the sky are overpowered by fierce dogs with iron fangs; while others, powerless, are torn asunder by ravens with terrible claws and sharp iron beaks. Some, being eaten, writhe and utter lamentations when attacked by various worms and beetles, flesh-flies and tens of thousands of black bees which cause large terrible wounds.

LXXXII. Again, some with mouths agape are constantly charred in heaps of burning embers; while some, thrust head down, are cooked like a mass of rice in great cauldrons made of iron.

LXXXIII. - LXXXIV. Having listened to the measureless suffering of hell, evil-doers, whose nature is adamant, are not shattered into a thousand pieces; (yet) only the time between the beginning and end of a breath separates them (from hell). As fear arises through making images or seeing pictures of hell, reading, remembering or hearing about hell

- so if one should experience the terrible consequences, then what need (is there) to say any thing (more)?

LXXXV. - LXXXVI. As surely as freedom from attachment produces the most excellent happiness among all happiness, so surely the very dreadful suffering of *Av$ci* hell (is the worst) among all suffering. The suffering that (one sustains) from the violent thrusts of three hundred spears in one day in this world cannot even be compared to a fraction, or a small measure, of hell's suffering.

LXXXVII. Thus, one will experience very terrible suffering for a hundred million years, for as long as (the force of) those non-virtuous (deeds) is not exhausted, so long will one not be freed from life (in the hells).

LXXXVIII. Therefore, by your own skill try not to acquire even an atom of fault - the seed of these fruits of non-virtue - through your conduct of body, speech and mind.

The sufferings of the hells described above are the effects of cruel and violent actions of body, speech and mind. Therefore avoid such actions at all cost. The Master N@g@rjuna recommended the daily recollection of the hot and cold hells in order to dissuade people from committing cruel and violent actions whose effects are rebirth in the hells.

LXXXIX. Those who abandon the virtue resulting in peace (will be born) in animal realms where there are also various dreadful sufferings, such as eating one another, killing, binding, beating, etc.

XC. Some are killed for pearls, wool, bones, meat, or skin; while others, powerless, are employed by kicking, striking, whipping or prodding with iron hooks.

Animals are beaten, abused, maltreated and killed. In addition, animals are generally ignorant of virtuous actions that can help them avoid suffering in the future.

XCI. Also among hungry ghosts continuous, unallayed suffering is produced through the lack of desired objects. Very terrible (sufferings) created by fear, hunger, thirst, cold, heat and weariness will have to be endured.

The realm of the hungry ghosts is one of the three lower realms, and like the hells and the realm of animals, various horrible sufferings are experience there. The suffering experienced by the hungry ghosts is the effect of avarice and miserliness.

XCII. Some, troubled by hunger, are not even able to eat a little discarded, coarse, or foul (food), (for each has) a mouth as big as the eye of a needle and a stomach the size of a mountain.

XCIII. Some, like the upper reaches of a dried palmyra tree, are naked with bodies of skin and bones; while some, with flames nightly (issuing) from (their) mouths, devour food of burning sand which has fallen into (their) mouths.

XCIV. Some poor ones cannot even find impure (food) like pus, excrement, blood, etc., so, striking one another's faces, (they) eat the pus of ripened goitres growing from (their fellows') throats.

XCV. For them even the moon is hot in the summertime, while even the sun is cold in the winter; trees become fruitless and rivers dry up if only looked upon by them.

XCVI. Having endured uninterrupted suffering, some individuals - securely bound by the noose of evil deeds committed - will not die for five or even ten thousand years.

XCVII. The Buddha said, "Though the sufferings which are experienced by hungry ghosts are various, they are of one taste; the cause is the avarice, miserliness and ignobility of people".

In general, the sufferings of hungry ghosts are:
Hunger, thirst, cold, heat and weariness. Their sufferings are the result of avarice and miserliness practised in former lives. Those who are wealthy, but who refuse to share with others, and who can only think of accumulating more and more for themselves, are liable to be born as hungry ghosts. Even if they escape suffering in the realm of hungry ghosts, and are born among human beings, they are likely to be very poor.

XCVIII. Also, (as a result) of the great pleasures in the heavens, the suffering of death and transmigration is greater; having contemplated thus, nobles should not crave for heaven which will come to an end.

The gods enjoy so much wealth, pleasure and peace that they never think of death or of practicing religion. However, their position is not permanent. At the time of their approaching death, they experience great mental anguish. They can see the suffering that will befall them in the near future. Consequently, their suffering is even greater than the physical suffering of the lower realms.

XCIX. - C. Their bodies' complexion becomes ugly, they do not like to sit, their garlands of flowers wither, their clothes become soiled, and sweat appears on their bodies - (all of which) never happened before. Just as on earth the signs of dying foretell man's approaching death, so these five former signs presage the death and transmigration of the gods dwelling in heaven.

When the gods are about to die, these five signs appear.
(i) They lose their great beauty and become ugly for the first time.
(ii) They become bored and restless for the first time.
(iii) Their flower garlands wither and die for the first time.
(iv) Their clothing becomes soiled for the first time.
(v) Their bodies become soiled and sweaty for the first time.

Then the gods know that they are about to die, and they realize that they have never thought about religion. They see the lower realms into which they are about to fall and the suffering they will experience.

CI. If there is not any merit remaining when transmigrating from the worlds of the gods, then, powerless, (they) will dwell as either animals, hungry ghosts or denizens of hell.

The gods will fall from higher realms to lower ones. If the merit they have accumulated in former lives is completely exhausted, they will be reborn even in the realms of woe. Then the suffering of the gods will indeed be great.

CII. Also among the demigods, there is great mental suffering because of natural hostility toward the splendor of the gods; though they are also intelligent the truth is not seen (by them) due to the veil of (their) Karma.

The realm of the demigods is permitted by mental suffering. The demigods are envious of the gods, because they cannot equal them in wealth and splendor. Although the demigods are wiser than human beings, they are so thoroughly conditioned by this strife that they cannot see the truth.

CIII. Sa ` s@ra is thus (as explained above), therefore birth is unfortunate among gods, human beings, denizens of hell, hungry ghosts and animals. Realize that birth is a receptacle of many ills.

Reflect upon the unsatisfactory nature of Sa`s@ra. The afflictions and Karma are the cause of rebirth in the six realms. Therefore to avoid rebirth in Sa`s@ra, the afflictions and Karma have to be eliminated.

CIV. (As you would) extinguish a fire if it suddenly caught hold of your clothes or head, just so strive to put an end to rebirth through renouncing Karma for there is no other aim more excellent than this.

Attaining Nirv@%a is a big project, so begin as soon as possible. Put into practice the path which can lead to release from Sa`s@ra without wasting another moment.

CV. Through morality, wisdom and concentration gain the peaceful, subdued and untainted state of Nirv@%a which is ageless, deathless, inexhaustible, and devoid of earth, water, fire, air, sun and moon.

These three are the principal divisions of the Noble Eightfold Path. Practice them, put an end to the afflictions and Karma and attain Nirv@%a which is transcendental. Various epithets are traditionally used to indicate the extraordinary nature of Nirv@%a. Therefore, it is said to be peaceful and the like, or it is said to be beyond the four material elements: earth and so forth.

CVI. These seven limbs of enlightenment - mindfulness, investigation, energy, interest, tranquillity, concentration, and equanimity- are the accumulation of virtue which is the cause of attaining Nirv@%a.

The seven limbs of Enlightenment were taught by the Buddha and have long been regarded as important keys to achieving the ultimate goal of Buddhism.

(i) Mindfulness leads the group, because it is with mindfulness that the way to Nirv@%a begins.

(ii) Investigation of factors *(dharmas)* preserves vigilance on the path.
(iii) Energy is needed to maintain progress on the path.
(iv) Interest is characterized by joy and lends enthusiasm to the practice.
(v) Tranquillity of mind is the fruit of eliminating the afflictions.
(vi) Concentration is synonymous with one-pointedness of mind.
(vii) Equanimity is an integrated state of mind free from chronic instability.

CVII. Without wisdom there is no concentration, and, again, without concentration there is no wisdom; but for one who has these two, the ocean of existence is made to be like (the water in) a cow's hoof-print.

The union of concentration and wisdom or calm and insight have always been regarded as essential for understanding the truth about reality and attaining freedom. The Buddha united concentration and wisdom on the night of His enlightenment and perceived directly interdependent origination. Thereby, he became the Enlightened One, the teacher of gods and men who knew how things arise and how they cease. Ever since, Buddhist masters have emphasized the importance of joining concentration and wisdom. Without concentration, it's impossible to develop wisdom, because a distracted and agitated mind is not a fit instrument for understanding the truth. However, concentration without wisdom is a vain achievement since it only brings about temporary relief from suffering and not a permanent solution to the real problems of life. However a practitioner who develops concentration and achieves a calm and steady mind and conjoins it with wisdom - the understanding of the interdependence and emptiness of all things, will gain mastery over the afflictions and Karma and will reduce the ocean of Sa ` s@ra to insignificance.

CVIII. These fourteen pronouncements which were declared by the Kinsman of the Sun to be inexpressible in the world

are not conducive to peace of mind, so do not speculate upon them.

Do not worry about the fourteen theories which do not lead to liberation. The fourteen are like shackles, a wilderness or a fever. They are not conducive to release from Sa ` s@ra because they are misleading and obscure the path to Nirv@%a. They are the fourteen propositions put to the Buddha and to which the Buddha refused to ascent.
(i) the universe is (a) eternal, (b) not eternal, (c) both eternal and not eternal, and (d) neither eternal nor not eternal.
(ii) That the universe is (a) finite, (b) infinite, (c) both finite and infinite, and (d) neither finite nor infinite.
(iii) That the Tath@gata (a) exists after death, (b) does not exist after death, (c) both exists and does not exist after death, and (d) neither exists nor does not exist after death.
(iv) That the soul is (a) identical with the body, or (b) different from the body.

CIX. - CXI. The Sage declared, "From ignorance originate volitions, from the latter consciousness, from consciousness originate name and form, from name and form originate the six sense organs, from the sense organs contact, from contact originates feeling, from the foundation of feeling originates craving, from craving grasping, from grasping originates becoming, from becoming birth occurs - if there is birth, then a very great heap of suffering ensues, such as sorrow, disease, old age, frustration, fear of death, etc.; however, by putting an end to birth, all these will cease."

CXII. This (doctrine of) Interdependent Origination is the profound and precious treasure of the teaching of the Conqueror; who rightly sees this (Interdependent Origination) sees the most excellent Buddha, the Knower of Reality.

The Buddha has been universally revered as the teacher of Interdependent Origination. Ordinary people are bound in Sa ` s@ra, because they fail to understand Interdependent Origination. When they understand Interdependent Origination, they will know the truth. They will see the insubstantiality of the self and the emptiness of all factors of existence, and will gain freedom. They will realize that all factors of experience are like the moon's reflection in water, neither existent nor non-existent.[7]

CXIII. In order to attain peace practice these eight parts of the Path: right view, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, right concentration, right speech, right action and right thought.

There are various arrangements of the parts of the Noble Eightfold Path. A common division has the parts of the path arranged in three groups: morality - right action, speech and livelihood, Meditation - right effort, mindfulness and concentration and Wisdom - right view and right thought. Here however the parts of the Path are arranged in four groups as follows.

(i) Right view investigates the nature of the Ultimate Truth.

(ii) Right thought reveals manifold objects.

(iii) Right livelihood, speech and action cause others to produce faith.

(iv) Right mindfulness, concentration and effort correct the afflictions.

CXIV. - CXV. This birth is suffering; craving is called the great origin of that (suffering); its cessation is liberation; and the path to attain that (liberation) is the Noble Eightfold Path. Therefore always try to realize the Four Noble Truths, for even lay people dwelling in the lap of prosperity cross the river of the afflictions by this knowledge.

Birth, sickness, old age and death are suffering. The afflictions: ignorance, craving and so forth and Karma are the cause.

Nirv@%a, the end of all suffering is cessation. The Noble Eightfold Path is the way to the end of suffering. Therefore, know suffering; remove the cause; attain cessation and practice the Path. You do not have to be a monk to attain Nirv@%a. Even lay people like the Buddha's own father attained liberation just by knowing the Four Noble Truths.

CXVI. Those who realized the Truth neither fell from the sky nor sprang up from the womb of the earth like grain, as they were formerly persons subject to the afflictions.

Liberated people have left behind the first two Truths and have attained the latter two. Formerly, they suffered and were subject to the afflictions just like ordinary people. However, they resolved to change their situation, consulted religious authorities, practiced the Path and attained the highest goal. Therefore, anyone can become an Arhat, Bodhisattva or a Buddha if only he or she decides to apply themselves.

CXVII. Oh fearless one, the Blessed One said that the mind is the root of virtue, so discipline your mind; this is beneficial and useful advice, so what need (is there) to say anything more.

As things stand now, you are controlled by your mind, and in turn your mind is subject to the afflictions and distractions. No wonder then that you are unhappy and distressed, affected by all sorts of troubles. But if only you could control your mind, then you could realize peace, happiness and freedom. The mind is the key to radically changing your way of experiencing the world and your own state of being. The Buddha and Buddhist masters have always emphasized the importance of the mind. Therefore, concentrate upon disciplining your own mind, and you will see a definite improvement in the quality of your life.

CXVIII. It is difficult even for a monk in isolation to follow the counsel which has been given to you: (yet) make this life meaningful through cultivating the quality of the essence of any of these practices.

Even if you can't follow all the advice given in this letter, do your best to practice as much of it as you can. Then your life will not have been wasted, but will have been worthwhile. You will certainly achieve greater happiness and prosperity now and in the future, and eventually you will gain freedom.

CXIX. - CXXa. Having rejoiced in the virtues of all (living beings), having also dedicated your threefold good conduct to the attainment of Buddhahood, and having mastered the whole of yoga, then you will have countless births in the realms of gods and human beings through this heap of merit.

CXXb. - CXXI. Born like [rya Avalokite^vara aiding through (his) conduct many stricken people and dispelling disease, old age, attachment and hatred, for limitless lifetimes like the Protector of the world, the Blessed One Amit@bha in His Buddha-field.

Through practicing the path, become like Avalokite^vara - the Great Bodhisattva - who born of his own free will in Sa`s@ra, relieves the suffering of all living beings and encourages them to tread the path to happiness and liberation. Become too like Amit@bha - the Heavenly Buddha - who dwells eternally in his Buddha-field,[8] The Happy land or Western Paradise where he nurtures the religious capacities of living beings so that they may attain to the final goal.

CXXII. - CXXIII. Having spread to the gods' realms, the sky and on the earth (your) great unblemished fame arising from wisdom, morality and giving, and having surely subdued the delight of gods in heaven and men on earth in the enjoyment

of good young women, and having gained the Lordship of the Conquerors extinguishing the arising of fear and death for multitudes of living beings oppressed by the afflictions, attain the faultless, ageless, fearless state (which is) peaceful, only a name and transcendent.

Master the wisdom of the conventional and ultimate truths. Practice the perfections of the Bodhisattva, giving and the like. In this way you will become an example to all in the world and in heaven. When you have become a great Bodhisattva or Buddha, you will exist as long as living beings exist to relieve their suffering and to show them the way to happiness and freedom.

Part Two

The Heart of Interdependent Origination

Section One

An Introduction to Nagarjuna's Heart of Interdependent Origination

All Buddhist schools have denied the existence of the self as an identical permanent and immutable substance which experiences the results of former actions. They have also universally rejected the notion of a supreme god. They have however accepted the relative reality of pre-existence and subsequent rebirth as well as the provisional efficiency of actions (Karma). Those who adhere to the doctrine of the self have opposed this view, because as they contend, denial of an identical permanent and immutable self controverts the efficiency of actions and the doctrine of rebirth. The Buddhist schools have replied to this objection with the doctrine of Interdependent Origination.

The doctrine of Interdependent Origination has been expounded at length by the Buddha in numerous discourses, most notably in the */@listambas#tra*[1] wherein the famous and often cited example of the Interdependent Origination of the sprout appears. Commentaries to the discourse were composed by Buddhist masters, such as N@g@rjuna and Kamala^$la. As the *Madhyamaka* system is based upon an interpretation of Interdependent Origination, this doctrine has been central to its inception and development. N@g@rjuna, the foremost exponent of the *Madhyamaka*, has written extensively on the subject of Interdependent Origination. Among his works are counted his commentary to the */@listambas#tra*, *[rya^@listambak@rik@n@mamah@y@nas#trat$k@* and the twenty-sixth chapter of *The Foundation Stanzas of the Middle Way*, and its commentary the *Dv@das@<gaparik&@n@masa}vi`^atiprakara%a* as well as *The Heart of Interdependent Origination* and its auto-

commentary. The Sanskrit text of *The Heart of Interdependent Origination* is no longer extant, therefore the text we used for the translation is the Tibetan version which appears in the *Tan Gyur* (mDo XVII). The Tibetan translation was made in the first quarter of the ninth century by Jinamitra, D@na^$la, /$lendrabodhi and Ye-shes-sde under the patronage of the then Tibetan king, Khri-sde-srong-tsan. *The Heart of Interdependent Origination* is widely attributed to N@g@rjuna. In this case, the traditional attribution has been largely accepted by modern scholars, not least on the strength of the fact that Candrak$rti cites a stanza and a half from the work in *The Clearly Worded* (*Prasannapad@*) his commentary to *The Foundation Stanzas of the Middle Way.*

Nonetheless, it seems reasonable to assume that only the first five of the seven stanzas which currently constitute the text in the Tibetan Canon actually belong to the original. This assumption follows from the fact that the auto-commentary covers only the first five stanzas, and from the fact that the sixth and seventh stanzas may be found in *Reasoning: The Sixty Stanzas* and in *The Ornament of the Special Commitments* (*Abhisamay@la ` k@ra*).

The Heart of Interdependent Origination, although short, is undoubtedly an important work, because of the axiological nature of the topic which it treats. The value of a declamatory and didactic statement on the part of N@g@rjuna with regard to the central doctrine of the Buddhist tradition, Interdependent Origination, can scarcely be questioned given the polemical nature of works like *The Foundation Stanzas of the Middle Way* and *Emptiness: The Seventy Stanzas*. Therefore, the treatment accorded to the doctrine of Interdependent Origination by N@g@rjuna in *The Heart of Interdependent Origination* has to be seen as having a formative function for the whole of the Mah@y@na tradition.

The doctrine of Interdependent Origination has from the very first been of paramount importance for practitioners of the Buddhist faith. In the */@listambas#tra*, the Lord, the Buddha has said, "The monk who sees Interdependent Origination, sees the Dharma. He who sees the Dharma, sees the Buddha." While all the schools of Buddhism have without exception accepted the teaching of

Interdependent Origination, it has been interpreted characteristically by the various schools. The Mah@y@na Buddhist accepts the interpretation of Interdependent Origination as it was expounded by N@g@rjuna and Asa<ga, the founders of the Middle Way (*madhyamaka*) and the Mind Only (*cittam@tra*) schools respectively. Both adopt the threefold cyclical classification of the twelve constituents of Interdependent Origination from *The Discourse of the Ten Stages* (*Da^abh#mikas#tra*).[2] In *The Heart of Interdependent Origination*, N@g@rjuna explains that the two alternatives of permanence and annihilation or the denial of continuity are avoided through the teaching of Interdependent Origination. N@g@rjuna, moreover, declares that Interdependent Origination is equivalent to Emptiness. Therefore Interdependent Origination is the very foundation of N@g@rjuna's conception of the ultimate truth.

The text, particularly if read along with the auto-commentary as the stanzas alone are extremely schematic, reveals an orientation rather different from that of *Reasoning: The Sixty Stanzas* and *Emptiness: The Seventy Stanzas*. It is also markedly different in its object and purpose from other well known works of N@g@rjuna like *The Foundation Stanzas of the Middle Way*. Firstly, it is clear that *The Heart of Interdependent Origination* is an elementary text meant to introduce the rank novice to the central doctrine of Buddhism specially as it is understood by the Mah@y@na tradition. In so far as it is elementary in nature, it is not primarily directed against the views of the Buddhist Realists. On the other hand the other texts included in this book as well as *The Foundation Stanzas of the Middle Way* are clearly aimed at establishing the *Madhyamaka* philosophy in the minds of the pre-*Madhyamaka* Buddhists.

The Heart of Interdependent Origination is directed at a general audience hardly, if at all, familiar with Buddhist tenets. This much is obvious from a number of important clues. In the first place, there appears a lengthy list of erroneous causes of the world of experience which includes the favorite doctrines of several non-Buddhist schools. The S@`khya doctrine of origination of the world

through the interaction of primordial matter and spirit is alluded to as is the doctrine of the Materialists who maintained that chance was the prime mover in the creative process. The doctrine of the Naiy@yikas who were also known as advocates of time, *K@lav@dins* is also mentioned. A similar list of erroneous causes of the origination of the world also appears in N@g@rjuna's *The Good Hearted Letter* but there too the text is admittedly an elementary and introductory one.

Later, we find a rhetorical question posed regarding the identity of the self and the ostensible creative function of a supreme self or god. Thereby with a single deft stroke, N@g@rjuna manages to reply both to the doctrine of an identical self and to that of a creator god. Both doctrines were undoubtedly popular, but neither can in any way be identified with any Buddhist school. Even the much maligned Personalists (*Pudgalav@dins*) of the middle period of the development of the final Buddhist conception of personality cannot be supposed to be the object of this critique, particularly as neither they nor any other Buddhist school ever went so far as to advocate the creative function of a supreme self. In the light of these considerations, it seems apparent that the text is chiefly meant to establish the Buddhist doctrine of Interdependent Origination implying as it does from the *Madhyamaka* standpoint, the continuity of cause and effect, the avoidance of alternative views and ultimately Emptiness. A case can also be made for asserting that *The Refutation of Objections* (*Vigrahavy@vartan$*) is also largely directed against non-Buddhist. In the case of that text, the opponent is usually thought to be a Naiy@yika because of the frequent appearance of the Ny@ya categories of logic. However, it should be recalled that *The Refutation of Objections* also contains references to wholesome and unwholesome factors which would seem to implicate the Buddhist realist system of soteriology.

Perhaps the most important message of the text is to be found in its insistence upon the cyclical nature of the twelve constituents of Interdependent Origination. This, it seems to us, is a significant improvement upon the linear scheme which is found in most Abhidharma or *Vigrahavy@vartan$* treatments of the subject. There,

as is well known, the twelve are also divided into three categories, however the division is much less sophisticated and also less satisfactory for a number of reasons which we will attempt to detail.

The rather simplistic schematization of the twelve constituents essayed by the Buddhist Realists merely assigns the first two constituents, ignorance and volitions, to the past life. The next eight from consciousness to becoming to the present life and the final two, birth and old age and death, to the future life. This linear and serial arrangement leaves several questions unanswered. Firstly, what happens next? Are we to assume that after birth and old age and death which as we have seen belong to the future life, ignorance and volitions simply take over again and so repeat the three lives procedure? Then what about the present life? Is it reasonable to suppose that ignorance and volitions which are said to belong to the past life simply disappear? Although scholastic solutions may have been proposed in an attempt to solve any or all of these problems, on the whole, we cannot help but conclude that the three lives scheme is at best rather artificial.

On the other hand, the division of the twelve into the three categories of afflictions, actions and sufferings which removes them from a serial progression and thereby detemporalizes them altogether has definite logical and psychological advantages. we would argue that the doctrine of Interdependent Origination is essentially synonymous with that of the Four Noble Truths, and most patently with the first two, the truths of suffering and its origin. The latter two truths, cessation and the path can be easily extrapolated from the constituents of Interdependent Origination merely by deconstructing them. In as much as the movement toward liberation is agreed to be a negative process, that is to say, an undoing of the knot of Sa`s@ra rather than the achievement of anything concrete, this is perfectly plausible. If our assumption is correct, then the truth of the cause of suffering is expressly stated to consist of afflictions and actions, and so N@g@rjuna's scheme is in complete harmony with this conception. Besides, let us take a look for a moment at how afflictions and actions function to produce suffering. The afflictions: ignorance, craving and clinging, in the

case of the twelve, are states of intellectual and emotional obscuration and perturbation. The absence of aversion or ill will which often occurs listed along side ignorance and craving or attachment need not bother us, because craving and clinging which are states of emotional attachment are obviously complimented by their opposite, that is aversion, ill will or anger. These states of intellectual and emotional confusion naturally impel one to actions, for the simple reason that an intellectual and emotional imbalance as a matter of course leads to volitional or intentional actions meant to secure the misapprehended objects of desire, or alternatively, remove the equally misapprehended objects of aversion. The first of the components of actions according to the scheme of the twelve presented in *The Heart of Interdependent Origination* are volitions. Even taken by themselves, volitions have a static as well as a dynamic facet. The static and dynamic aspects are reflected in the alternative translations of the original term *sa`sk@ra*: mental formations, predispositions, volitions etc. Taken together with becoming which here represents the critical force which impels one to continued rebirth, the actions category clearly constitutes the specific cause of particular forms of experience, all of which taken together may be classified as sufferings. Now if we examine for a moment the seven constituents which comprise the category of sufferings in N@g@rjuna's scheme we will see that it includes: consciousness, name and form, the six sense spheres, contact, feeling, birth and old age and death. All of the foregoing clearly make up the stuff of ordinary experience, the conscious as opposed to the unconscious, or semi conscious categories of afflictions and actions. The effect, in general, of such experience is to reinforce, not to dissolve the causes of the experience of suffering. Therefore, it is entirely reasonable to suppose that **from these seven, in turn, three originate**,[3] that is to say, the experience of ordinary sentient beings, if left unchecked by appropriate techniques, naturally contributes to the perpetuation of the wheel of existence, the circle of Sa`s@ra.

In *The Heart of Interdependent Origination,* N@g@rjuna firmly establishes causality as the basis of the phenomenal world, but this

affirmation is emphatically linked with the declaration of the equivalence of causality and Emptiness. **From factors (which are) only empty, empty factors originate**.[4] This brief and unelaborated declaration reveals the central theme of N@g@rjuna's philosophy.

The commentary discusses the Emptiness of factors in terms of the absence in them of self and that which pertains to a self (*@tma-@tm$ya*). The first term is generally understood by all who have had some experience with Buddhist thought, but the latter is sometimes a source of puzzlement. In fact, the term really refers to the aggregates or general constituents which are believed to compose the personality. If we look even closer at the meaning of the phrase, "that which pertains to a self", we will see that it also implies the manifold of factors (*dharmas*). The eighteenth chapter of *The Foundation Stanzas of the Middle Way*, for instance, bears the title *[tmadharmapar$k&@* in the Tibetan and Chinese renderings of the name of the chapter. The fact is that the aggregates are just what the name implies, that is aggregates of factors, and so the factors are just fragments of experience which collectively receive the name aggregates. Therefore, the insubstantiality of the self in the context of this text is not restricted to the not-self of early Buddhism, but is also extended to include the insubstantiality of factors (*dharmanair@tmya*) or Emptiness itself.

Although N@g@rjuna does not allow any misapprehension to enter the mind of his interlocutor regarding the emptiness of factors, his concern in *The Heart of Interdependent Origination* is to emphasize the equipoise between causality and Emptiness on the phenomenal level and particularly, in the sphere of psychological and even moral reality. While the factors are empty, they nonetheless do originate after a fashion. If they did not, and the relationship between cause and effect were wholly discarded, it would result in the extreme alternative of nihilism which is morally and existentially abhorrent, because it leads to aggravated states of suffering. Therefore, in the world, factors originate from causes. The advocates of an identical self which may be assumed to belong by and large to the Brahmanical or priestly tradition in Indian

philosophy would argue for the existence of an identical self which could, in their view, safeguard the psychological and moral continuity of a series of existences, but this is equally untenable. An identical self could never respond to the contortions imposed upon the personality by the effects of intentional actions. As Candrak$rti was to put it later, "Such an identical self would necessarily be a non-entity, a flower growing in the sky" with no relevance to action and consequence.

But what then exactly is the relationship between the empty factors which function as causes and the equally empty factors which appear as effects? N@g@rjuna supplies a list of examples by means of which the unfathomable but all too familiar phenomenon is to be understood. The list includes such well known favorites as the instance of the kindling of a lamp from a flame, but it also introduces some rather novel examples such as the first, that of oral instructions which is elaborated in the commentary. The example has a peculiar relevance if we recall that the whole text is set in the context of a master's instruction of a disciple. The conclusion is that from a cause, an effect originates, but whether cause and effect are identical or different is inexpressible.

The notion of inexpressibility is central to the concluding portions of the text, although it is perhaps not as obvious in N@g@rjuna's other works. So much so that an outstanding scholar of *Madhyamaka* philosophy some years ago was lead to state in print that "unlike the Ved@nta, the *Madhyamaka* never sets up inexpressibility as a truth value." According to him, N@g@rjuna opts for absolute negation instead. The statement would of course not have been made if the author had been familiar with and had accepted the very clear declaration in *The Heart of Interdependent Origination*. Actually, the advocacy of inexpressibility in so far as the functioning of cause and effect in the phenomenal world is concerned isn't all that strange to the *Madhyamaka*. Candrak$rti, in elucidating phenomenal causality, and causality can of course only be phenomenal, describes the *Madhyamaka* point of view by likening it to that of the man in the street or the farmer in the field. Such a person simply takes cognizance of the fact that having

formerly planted a seed, a son is born, or alternatively, a tree has sprung up. He by no means goes into the abstract and quite useless business of speculating about whether the seed and the son or tree are identical or different. The problem however did not go away altogether and teachers of Buddhism have always had to resort to examples of a similar kind to illustrate the continuity of causality in the absence of identity. An Empress of China, for instance, is said to have been convinced of the doctrine only when shown the progression of flames appearing in individual lamps lit successively and then being asked whether the first and last flame were identical or different. What answer could there be other than inexpressibility?

The auto commentary to *The Heart of Interdependent Origination* also contains, early on, two more analogies which we think it worth calling to the attention of the reader. Not because they are altogether unknown, although the first is better known than the second, but rather because they illustrate two complimentary currents in the development of Buddhist thought. The first belongs to the analytical current characteristic of much of the Buddhist Realist tradition and perhaps best represented in the first book of the Pali *Abhidhamma Pitaka*, *The Collection of Factors* (*Dhammasangani*). It is the example of a chariot, or better, the constituents of a chariot. It is best known as a stock analogy for explaining the doctrine of not-self in the context of the theory of the aggregates or factors. It appears in *The Questions of King Milinda* for this very purpose and it represents those analytical, or to use a modern expression, reductionist tendencies in Buddhist philosophy.

The second and less well known analogy is that of the roof beams of a house which depend one upon another. This analogy reflects the relational or synthetic current in Buddhist philosophy. Like the analytical current, it has its Canonical origins, in this case, in *The Book of Relations* (*Patth@na*) the last of the seven books of the Pali *Abhidhamma Pitaka*. In modern terms, it represents a reaction to a totally analytical or reductionist approach to reality and introduces an holistic vision which comes more and more to the fore in Mah@y@na and *Madhyamaka* philosophy. The appearance of

these two analogies in the auto commentary, almost casually as it would seem, is nonetheless significant, because it signals the importance of these two currents in Buddhist thought, currents which not to put too fine a point on it, were hardly duplicated in the West until the Twentieth century.

In conclusion, perhaps a word or two about the style of the composition of the text might be in order. In keeping with the elementary nature of the work, the style is hardly as complex or technical as that of texts like *Emptiness: The Seventy Stanzas* not to mention *The Foundation Stanzas of the Middle Way*. The greater part of the text is strictly didactic, and it is in this manner that the threefold division supported by N@g@rjuna is presented. Nonetheless, the latter portions of the work do contain a couple of arguments ad absurdum and the use of simile or example also features as it does so prominently in *Reasoning: The Sixty Stanzas*.

It might almost be said that the text taken as a whole together with its auto commentary is Upanishadic in tone. However it would be a mistake to read too much into this resemblance. Although the style and content of the text may appear at first glance similar to the famous Upanishadic dialogue wherein the notion of actions and their effects in future lives, in other words, Karma, is first introduced into the Brahmanical tradition, the rigorously logical and analytical approach of the Buddhist thinker remains unmistakable. Notwithstanding its elementary character, *The Heart of Interdependent Origination* is still a work of systematic philosophy, or if the reader prefers, psychology belonging to the Abhidh armic tradition.

The text was first translated by me together with an old and valued colleague many many years ago, and we must admit that in general we have not made any significant changes to the original translation. The text is simply too precise and concise to in its form to allow for any creative transformation as the euphemism goes. Despite the consistency of the version presented here with earlier translations of the text done by us, we would like to underline the fact that each time we look at *The Heart of Interdependent Origination* again, we find new levels of meaning, new possible

implications and new pregnant suggestions. All of this is an eloquent testimony to the depth of N@g@rjuna's thought and to his skill in expressing profound and far reaching intuitions in a very few words.

Section Two

The Stanzas of The Heart of Interdependent Origination

Salutations to Ma~ju^r$ The Youthfully Transformed.

I. The twelve individual constituents of Interdependent Origination which were taught by the Sage are wholly included in three: afflictions, actions and suffering.

II. The first, eighth and ninth are afflictions, the second and tenth are actions, and the remaining seven are sufferings. Thus the twelve factors are included in three.

III. From the three, two originate; from the two, seven originate; and from these seven, in turn, the three originate. Thus the wheel of existence revolves again and again.

IV. The whole world is cause and effect; excluding this, there is no sentient being. From factors (which are) only empty, empty factors originate.

V. Through the examples of: oral instruction, a lamp, a mirror, a seal, a sun-crystal, a seed, sourness and sound, the wise should understand the non-transmigration as well as the re-emergence of the aggregates.

VI. Those who impute origination even in regard to very subtle entities, being unwise, have not seen the meaning of conditioned origination.

VII. Hence, there is nothing to be denied and nothing to be affirmed. See the real rightly, (for) one who sees the real is released.

The Heart of Interdependent Origination of [c@rya N@g@rjuna is complete herein.

Section Three

Nagarjuna's Commentary to The Heart of Interdependent Origination

The disciple who possesses renunciation and is desirous of hearing, attentive, retentive, appreciative and able to dispel imputation, having drawn near to the master, asked thus about the doctrine of the Tath@gata. In what are **The twelve individual constituents of Interdependent Origination which were taught by the Sage** included, for I beg to see and study (them). The master, having understood him to ask about the essence of those (twelve) factors, thus spoke these lucid words from the stanza, (these twelve) **are wholly included in three: afflictions, actions and sufferings.**

Thus, twelve is ten plus two. Constituents alone are individual as the constituents of a chariot have been shown to be, therefore, individual constituents. **The Sage**, because mighty of body, voice and mind, (while) taught by the Sage is synonymous with demonstrated and elucidated (by him).

The twelve constituents do not originate from causes (like): space, primordial matter, natural order, spirit, nor through dependence upon others, god, time, intrinsic being,[5] chance, circumstance, free will and so on. They are interdependently originated. As the roof beams of a house depend upon one another, so these twelve individual constituents **are wholly included in three: afflictions, actions and sufferings. Wholly,** means all without remainder.

Which are afflictions, which actions and which sufferings? How and in what (categories) are these constituents of Interdependent Origination included?

II. The first, eighth and ninth are afflictions. Of the twelve constituents, the first is ignorance, the eighth craving and the ninth clinging. Know these three to be afflictions. If it is asked, which are actions? (Then) **the second and tenth are actions**. the second is volitions and the tenth becoming. Know these two factors to be included in actions. **And the remaining seven are sufferings**. (Five) constituents are included in afflictions and actions. Know the seven which remain to be included in sufferings. Thus, consciousness, name and form, the six sense spheres, contact, feeling, birth and old age and death. The word, **and**, (serves) to include (sufferings which are not listed among the seven constituents), that is, the sufferings of separation from the loved, meeting with the despised and of frustrated desires. Thus, **the twelve factors are included in three**. Therefore know these twelve factors as afflictions, actions and sufferings. The (Tibetan) particle *ni* (which occurs between the word factors) and the phrase are included in three thus indicates that there remains part of the sentence (which is wanting), that is, the constituents demonstrated in the discourse are complete herein. Thus, it has been determined that there are none apart from these. Just so, but please demonstrate what these afflictions, actions and sufferings originate from.

III. From the three, two originate. From the three which are afflictions: ignorance, craving and clinging, **two** which are actions, volitions and becoming, **originate**. **From the two** (which are actions) **seven originate**. Thus (those seven) sufferings demonstrated above, (that is: consciousness, name and form, the six sense spheres, contact, feeling, birth and old age and death). **From these seven, in turn, the three originate** which are afflictions. Thus again, from the three (which are) afflictions originate two (which are) actions. **Thus the wheel of existence revolves again and again**.

(In the world of) becoming there are three (spheres): (those of) desire, form and the formless (sphere). Ordinary people have become like a wheel which revolves without rest. The (Tibetan) particle, *ni*, (which occurs between the phrase the wheel of existence and the

phrase revolves again and again) thus indicates a sense of uncertainty. That is, while a wheel revolves serially (each point on the circumference following upon the preceding one), in the three spheres, it (does) not happen thus. (Therefore) uncertainty is indicated. Who is called the sentient being,[6] the god of all individual beings? How is his creation?

IV. The whole world is cause and effect, excluding superimposition, **there is no sentient being**. That which is superimposed does not exist when examined, so it is not fitting that what is just nominally existent should exist substantially.

If so, then who transmigrates from this world to the next? From this to the next world, not so much as an atom transmigrates, however, **from factors (which are) only empty, empty factors originate**. Entities are without self and that pertaining to a self,[7] thus, afflictions and actions have become the causes. From these five factors (ignorance, craving, clinging, volitions and becoming) which are empty, originate sufferings without self and that pertaining to a self. The seven empty factors (consciousness, name and form, the six sense spheres, contact, feeling, birth and old age and death) are alleged[8] to be effects. Such is the purport.

Thus, what is without self and that pertaining to a self is neither self nor that pertaining to a self. However, from factors without self originate factors in their intrinsic being without self. Thus, understand it as it has been demonstrated.

From factors in their intrinsic being without self originate only factors in their intrinsic being without self. What are examples of these?

V. Through the examples of: oral instructions, a lamp, a mirror, a seal, a sun-crystal[9] a seed, sourness and sound, know also (what is in its) intrinsic being without self, as well as the subsequent existence. For instance, if there were transference of the instructions from the master's mouth to the disciple, then the master would become deprived of the instructions. Therefore, there is no transference. Nor are the instructions of the disciple from any other (source),because if so they would be without cause. As with the instructions from the masters mouth, so in a like manner, at the

point of death, the mind does not transmigrate to the subsequent existence, because the error of permanence would follow. Nor does the subsequent existence originate from any other (source), because the error of being without a cause would follow. As the master's instructions are the cause of those of the disciple, (but whether) those (of the disciple) are identical with those (of the master) or different, is inexpressible. So in a like manner, (whether) the mind at the point of death and the mind which belongs to (the subsequent) birth are identical or different is inexpressible. Similarly, from a flame, an oil lamp (is kindled); from a form, an image is produced in a mirror; from a seal, an impression, from a sun-crystal, fire, from a seed, a sprout, from the juice of a sour fruit, saliva is engendered (even in the mouths of others'); or yet again from a sound, an echo is produced. Thus, **the wise should understand the non-transmigration as well as the re-emergence of the aggregates**.

There are aggregates of form, feeling, perception, volitions and consciousness. Their re-emergence means that from an extinguished cause another effect originates, (but) from this world to the next, not so much as an atom transmigrates. Therefore the wheel of becoming is produced by the propensity for erroneous imagination. The phrase "as well as" indicates opposition. (That is), the opposite of the re-emergence of the aggregates should (also) be understood. One who understands entities to be impermanent, full of suffering, empty and insubstantial will not be deluded in regard to entities. Free from delusion, attachment will not originate; free from attachment, aversion will not originate; free from aversion, actions will not be performed; free from actions, clinging to entities will not originate; free from clinging to entities, becoming will not be engendered; free from becoming, rebirth will not occur; and free from rebirth suffering of the body and mind will not originate. Thus the erroneous views, the alternatives of permanence and annihilation etc., are dispelled. (In this regard) there are two stanzas.

VI. Those who impute origination even in regard to very subtle entities, being unwise, have not seen the meaning of conditioned origination.

VII. Hence, there is nothing to be denied and nothing to be affirmed. See the real rightly, (for) one who sees the real is released.

The commentary to The Heart of Interdependent Origination is complete herein.

Translated and corrected by the Indian master Jinamitra, D@na^$la, /$lendrabodhi and (the Tibetan translator) Bande Ye-shes-sde etc.

Part Three
Reasoning: The Sixty Stanzas

Section One

An Introduction to Nagarjuna's Reasoning: The Sixty Stanzas

Reasoning: The Sixty Stanzas is unique among the shorter texts of N@g@rjuna. It occupies a central place in the philosophical opus of the author and is second in importance to *The Foundation Stanzas of the Middle Way*. The style of the composition of the text is noticeably different from that in either *The Heart of Interdependent Origination* or *Emptiness: The Seventy Stanzas*. It differs markedly also from the style of the great work, *The Foundation Stanzas of the Middle Way* which *Emptiness: The Seventy Stanzas* somewhat resembles. *Reasoning: The Sixty Stanzas* is less dry, polemical and rhetorical than any of the texts of N@g@rjuna so far mentioned.

It makes very extensive use of simile throughout the course of the work. Not that simile does not appear in the other texts named, but in them, it is a supplement to manifold arguments, or proto-syllogisms mostly of the *reductio ad absurdum* variety. In *Reasoning: The Sixty Stanzas,* the roles of simile and argument seem to have been inverted, and many well known similes common to Mah@y@na literature appear often. The magical man, the circle of the whirling fire brand, the fairy city, dream and the mirage occur as well as the compelling simile of the moon's reflection in the water.

The presence of so many similes makes the text particularly accessible to the ordinary reader. After all, the simile is a part of the language and experience of the man in the street. The early *M@dhyamikas* and *Prasa<gikam@dhyamikas* always accepted the opinion of the man in the street in regard to the reality of the

everyday world. Besides, as the saying of dubious origins but not so dubious meaning goes, "A picture is worth a thousand words."

Of course N@g@rjuna's extensive use of simile in this and even in other texts is not the result of a peculiar stylistic bent on his part. The use of simile formed a recognized part of the Indian religious scholar's arsenal of didactic and polemical weapons. It reflects the legitimate use of comparison (*upam@na*), which was an accepted means of knowledge (*pram@%a*) in India. Later, the Buddhist logicians, Dign@ga and Dharmak$rti rejected it, but it was always accepted by the early and later *M@dhyamikas*. Western scholars of philosophy have sometimes disparaged comparison, or simile as a valid means of knowledge. However, the attitude of the *Madhyamaka* to the problematic of communication and persuasion was always chiefly influenced by the criterion of effectiveness. The *M@dhyamikas* like N@g@rjuna and Candrak$rti never troubled themselves overly much about strict and largely arbitrary conceptual rules regarding the process of cognition and comprehension.

No doubt, there may be a real question about the worth of comparison if one takes the case of the classical Ny@ya example of it. There, an interlocutor is told that an unknown animal never seen by him resembles a cow, and by means of this suggestion, he is supposed to produce an indirect cognition of the unseen animal. The similes appearing in Buddhist texts which speak of Nirv@%a as similar to happiness or peace might fall into this category inasmuch as the unpracticed novice can hardly be expected to produce an adequate cognition of Nirv@%a on the basis of such comparisons. However, most of the examples of similes which occur in *Madhyamaka* literature are not of this kind. Rather than comparing something unknown, like an unseen animal or an unattained Nirv@%a with something known, like a cow or happiness which are or may be relatively familiar to the interlocutor, they compare something quite well known to him with something else equally well known to him. They merely point out the similarity between the two phenomena which may well have hither to remained unnoticed by the unaware individual. For example, the everyday

world of experience which is well known to the unpractised person may be compared to the state of dream, another phenomenon also well known to him. The similarity between the two which he has hither to ignored may be brought home to him by means of the use of comparison. Admittedly, the example of dream is an old favorite of philosophers who take a Mentalist line, but it remains very compelling, and recent developments in science and psychology would appear to support its relevance.

The fact remains that notwithstanding the technicality of part of the foregoing considerations and the difficulty of some of the subjects treated in the text, *Reasoning: The Sixty Stanzas* remains a highly readable an even entertaining text. This quality is accounted for not only by the extensive use of simile to which I have already alluded, but also to a certain colorful character of the language of the work in general. Therefore, we would particularly recommend it to readers who may not have a taste for the more cryptic and polemical works.

The principal subject treated by N@g@rjuna in *Reasoning: The Sixty Stanzas* is Interdependent Origination. Interdependent Origination is of course also the subject treated in *The Heart of Interdependent Origination*, and its identification as the subject of this work gives us some indication of the importance of the text. Interdependent Origination is the real heart of Buddhism in general and Buddhist soteriological philosophy in particular. While *The Heart of Interdependent Origination* presents an ingenious schem e for understanding the twelve constituents, and establishes the impossibility of the alternative views of eternalism and nihilism, it only touches briefly on the Emptiness of the elements of Interdependent Origination. *Reasoning: The Sixty Stanzas*, on the other hand, is mainly concerned with the demonstration of the fact that Interdependent Origination does not really originate. The centrality of the theme of Interdependent Origination to *Reasoning: The Sixty Stanzas* is evident in the benedictory stanza where N@g@rjuna acknowledges the Buddha's special achievement in teaching Interdependent Origination. Incidentally, the stanza closely resembles that which precedes *The Foundation Stanzas of*

the Middle Way. Candrak$rti, in his commentary, is also keen to point out the significance of the mention of the Buddha in the context of the teaching of Interdependent Origination, and he also unequivocally declares Interdependent Origination to be the primary subject of the text.

Reasoning: The Sixty Stanzas may be seen to occupy a sort of middle ground between *The Heart of Interdependent Origination* on the one hand and *Emptiness: The Seventy Stanzas* on the other. That is precisely why I decided to place it second in this series of translations of three of N@g@rjuna's shorter works. While *The Heart of Interdependent Origination* gives a rather elementary although extremely valuable account of the Mah@y@na version of the doctrine of Interdependent Origination, *Reasoning: The Sixty Stanzas* emphasizes the unoriginated reality of the conventional causal condition. This leaves the way clear for a rigorous demonstration of Emptiness, the real state of things.

In addition to the primary theme of Interdependent Origination, the text also contains some very frank and somewhat novel discussion of a number of ideas which although they may have been treated elsewhere in the body of N@g@rjuna's work emerge very clearly in *Reasoning: The Sixty Stanzas.* One is the question of the status of Nirv@%a. This subject has a chapter dedicated to it in *The Foundation Stanzas of the Middle Way*[1] and N@g@rjuna also treats it briefly in *Emptiness: The Seventy Stanzas,* but here the treatment is particularly clear because the author and his illustrious commentator express themselves without reservation on the subject.

The familiar alternatives of existence and non-existence and both existence and non-existence are presented and rejected according to recognizable patterns, but the case for the relativity and illusory nature of Nirv@%a is stated without caution or equivocation. Following the spirit of the analogy found in *The Lotus S#tra,* (*Saddharmapu%}ar$kas#tra)* the text explains that Nirv@%a is just an antidote taught by the Buddhas in order to lure ordinary people away from their attachment to the world of existence. It has no independent status at all either as an entity or a non-entity.

Nirv@%a is therefore ultimately an illusion. The remark contained in Candrak$rti's commentary to the effect that "if there were anything more excellent than Nirv@%a, it too would be an illusion" is particularly revealing. It sums up the radical and absolute integrity of the M@dhyamika philosopher who can throw away the most sacred truths of his conventional faith in the interest of liberation from all points of view.

Another very remarkable element to be found in the text is a specially forthright declaration in favour of the primacy of consciousness. I have argued in *Madhyamaka Schools in India* and elsewhere in various articles[2] that the philosophy of the *Vij~@nav@da* or *Yog@c@ra* is very largely anticipated in its essentials in N@g@rjuna's and even in Candrak$rti's works. There are enough suggestions in *The Foundation Stanzas of the Middle Way* and in *The Jeweled Garland* (*Ratn@val$*) as well as in *The Clearly Worded* (*Prasannapad@*) of Candrak$rti to draw the appropriate conclusions. However, in *The Sixty Stanzas*, there is a straightforward proclamation that the supposed material elements of the world are to be included in consciousness, although the statement is qualified in the very same stanza by a reference to the soteriological benefit of this assumption of a provisional perspective affirming the primacy of consciousness. The provisional nature of the affirmation of Mind Only (*cittam@tra*), I believe, is beyond doubt even according to the works of the early founders of the school, Asa<ga and Vasubandhu.

Again, there is a interesting discussion of the process of debate and persuasion in the text. N@g@rjuna is a passed master at the art of debate as he has shown not only in *The Refutation of Objections*[3], but also in *The Foundation Stanzas of the Middle Way* and in *Emptiness: The Seventy Stanzas*. In *The Refutation of Objections,* he disavows the commitments of conventional logicians who are not enlightened by the vision of non-duality which inspires the M@dhyamika[4]. Nonetheless, he handles logical devices with consummate skill and it would seem relish. In the present text, N@g@rjuna seems almost willing to relegate debate and disputation to the status of a secondary effec t of the afflictions. He stresses the

absence of any objective position and admonishes Buddhists not to fall into the trap of affirming entities in disputation. It is almost as if the silence of the anonymous Taoist sage or Tantric adept has begun to tempt the great dialectician. Of course, there are many passages in the text where the importance of the task of constructive engagement in conceptual activity and conventional usage for the benefit of others is emphasized.

The concluding portions of the text increasingly underline the theme, already encountered earlier in the work, of the ensnaring character of the apprehension - in the sense of appropriation - of an entity, objective position or support. Although the original terms are different, and the difference has been reflected in the English translations of each, they have a common quality. They speak of the conceptual commitment made unconsciously by most to a particular scheme of the world or even to a set of fragmented opinions, or again to the elements or objects of experience. Affirmation and appropriation of such schemes, opinions and objects condemns one to living out ones existence in a world of dreams where one can never achieve freedom. The point is rather to liberate oneself from the entanglements of such mental commitments to the illusions of the world, be they ever so elevated, and achieve a state of total vacuity. Total vacuity might sound empty and hollow, but it is not the case. Once more, conceptions and expressions obscure the actual nature of the real.

Candrak$rti's commentary is also full of novel ideas and lively discussion. There is far too much material in fact, given my limitations of time and space, to be dealt with exhaustively. The explanatory notes consequently present approximate renderings in English of important passages and particularly clarifying elaborations.

Candrak$rti's commentary is spirited and lucid and once again, the style of the original seems more relaxed than, for instance, that of Candrak$rti's commentary to *The Foundation Stanzas of the Middle Way, The Clearly Worded*. This however does not mean that Candrak$rti's commentary to *The Sixty Stanzas* was not held in the highest esteem by prominent scholars who followed

in the tradition of the *M@dhyamikas*. Indeed, Sonam Senge, a noteworthy Tibetan scholar of the fifteenth century who wrote numerous works on *Madhyamaka* philosophy considered it one of the foremost works of the author. He names it as one of the three so called "great commentaries" composed by Candr ak$rti along with *The Clearly Worded* and the auto-commentary to *The Entry into The Middle Way* (*Madhyamak@vat@rav=tti).*

It is not surprising that the commentary should have been held in such high regard. The text contains a rich variety of elucidations of the themes presented in the stanzas. Consequently, Candrak$rti's commentary succeeds remarkably well in the task of giving even greater form and color to an already rich and vivid text.

Section Two

Reasoning: The Sixty Stanzas

Obeisance to Ma~ju^r$, the Youthfully Transformed.
I offer obeisance to the Lord of the Sages (The Buddha) who proclaimed Interdependent Origination, and who thereby avoided origination and destruction.

I. Those whose intellects have gone well beyond existence and non-existence and do not dwell (anywhere), perfectly meditate upon the meaning of the conditioned which is profound and without a support.

II. (The alternative of) non-existence, the source of all defects has been utterly rejected. Do listen (as) the reasoning by which existence too is to be rejected (is explained).

III. As according to the first thought of ordinary people, entities truly exist, why is not their non-existence accepted to be the cause of liberation?

IV. (The view of) existence does not achieve liberation from becoming, nor does (the view of) non-existence. The Great Person is freed through the complete understanding of (the interdependence of) existence and non-existence.

V. Those who do not see suchness are attached to the world and Nirv@%a, but those who see suchness are not attached to the world and Nirv@%a.

VI. Becoming and Nirv@%a - neither of these is existent; the complete understanding of becoming may be called Nirv@%a.

VII. As with regard to the extinction of a formerly originated entity, cessation is imputed, so too, the Holy Ones consider cessation (to be like) a magical creation.

VIII. By means of complete destruction (of the afflictions and actions) cessation will arise, not by means of complete understanding of compounded factors, (but) by whom will it be directly experienced (and) what will the knowledge of that destruction be like?

IX. If the aggregates are not cut off, even though the afflictions be exhausted, going beyond will not occur. When they are cut off, then liberation occurs.

X. When what is originated from the condition of ignorance is analyzed through perfect knowledge, no perception at all of either origination or cessation occurs.

XI. & XII. When, in this life, one is beyond sorrow and has done what had to be done, if after the nature of factors is realized a distinction exists, those who impute origination even in regard to very subtle entities, being unwise, have not seen the meaning of conditioned origination.

XIII. If Sa`s@ra is turned back by the monk who has exhausted the afflictions, why was not its beginning demonstrated by the Perfect Buddha?

XIV. If there were a beginning, then definitely a view would also be adopted, (but) how is it that what is interdependently originated has a beginning and an end?

XV. How can what was earlier originated again be turned

back? Free from the alternatives of antecedence and subsequence, cyclical existence appears like a magical illusion.

XVI. When a magical illusion is supposed to originate, or when it is (supposed to be) destroyed, one who knows about it is not deluded, (but) one who is ignorant about it will be greatly affected emotionally.

XVII. Those who see the world of existence with intelligence as like a mirage and a magical illusion are not entirely corrupted by the view of the alternative of antecedence and the alternative of subsequence.

XVIII. Whosoever imputes origination and destruction to compounded factors does not at all know the movement of the wheel of Interdependent Origination.

XIX. Whatsoever originates dependent upon this and that does not originate in its intrinsic being. How can what is not originated in its intrinsic being be called originated?

XX. Because of the extinction of the cause (of becoming), peace is imputed to be "extinction" (but) as there is nothing which is extinguished in its intrinsic being, how can it be called "extinction?"

XXI. Therefore, nothing at all originates and nothing at all ceases. The path of origination and destruction was demonstrated intentionally.

XXII. Through knowing origination, destruction is known; through knowing destruction, impermanence is known; through knowing the way to penetrate impermanence, the Holy Dharma is also understood.

XXIII. Those who know that Interdependent Origination is well clear of origination and destruction cross the ocean of worldly existence that is born of views.

XIV. Ordinary people who have the notion of the substantiality of entities as they are flawed by the erroneous views of existence and non-existence and controlled by the afflictions are deceived by their own minds.

XXV. Those who are wise in regard to entities see that entities are impermanent, deceptive factors, pithless, empty, insubstantial and wholly vacuous.

XXVI. Without an objective position, without a support, without foundation and without abiding, entities only originated from the cause of ignorance are entirely without beginning, middle or end.

XXVII. Without essence, like a banana tree and a fairy city, the unbearable city of delusion that is cyclical existence appears like a magical illusion.

XXVIII. Whatsoever appears to the worldly (commencing) from Brahm@ and the like as real is false for the Holy Personalities. Therefore, what remains apart from this?

XXIX. The worldly who are infatuated by ignorance follow the current (of their) desire, while the wise are free from desire. How can their virtue be similar?

XXX. First, the seeker for reality should be told that everything exists. Later, when he has understood things and is free from desire, he should be told that everything is vacuous.

XXXI. Those inferior people who do not understand the

meaning of vacuity and accept merely the verbal sense do not accomplish merit and are lost.

XXXII. It has been explained that the effects of actions are surely not lost and that there are six realms of sentient beings. Having thoroughly understood their nature, non-origination has also been demonstrated.

XXXIII. Intentionally, the Conquerors explained "I" and "Mine". Similarly, the aggregates, elements and sense spheres were also proclaimed intentionally.

XXXIV. The primary elements etc. are included in consciousness. If freedom arises through this understanding, why are they not erroneously imagined?

XXXV. The Conquerors proclaimed that Nirv@%a is the only truth, so who among the wise could understand the rest not to be false?

XXXVI. As long as there is movement of the mind, so long one will be in the domain of M@ra. (If it is otherwise), then in that case, how will faultlessness not be justified?

XXXVII. The world has ignorance as a condition, because the Buddhas proclaimed it to be so. Therefore, why is it not justified that this world be (the effect of) conceptualization?

XXXVIII. How will what is extinguished when ignorance is extinguished not be seen to be the construction of ignorance?

XXXIX. Whatsoever originates from a cause does not endure without conditions. It is destroyed through the absence of conditions, therefore, how can it be apprehended to exist?

XL. If the exponents of existence remain attached to (their) precious entities and continue in this way, there is nothing amazing in it.

XLI. However it is amazing that the exponents of the impermanence of everything who rely upon the Buddha's way continue to cling to such precious entities in disputation.

XLII. If when analyzed what are called this and that are not to be perceived, (then) what wise man will argue that this and that are real?

XLIII. Those who are attached to the self and the world as not dependent, alas, are attracted to the views of permanence, impermanence and the like.

XLIV. For whosoever holds that dependent entities are established in reality how will the faults of permanence and the like not also occur?

XLV. Those who hold that dependent entities are like the moon's reflection in water, neither true nor false, are not attracted to a view.

XLVI. If the acceptance of entities is present, the terrible erroneous views will arise from which attachment and ill will originate. From the latter, disputation will arise.

XLVII. That (the acceptance of entities) is the cause of all views. Without it, the afflictions will not originate, therefore, if this is known, views and afflictions will be thoroughly purified.

XLVIII. How will this be known? - By seeing Interdependent Origination. The Knower of Suchness (The Buddha) said

that the dependently originated does not originate.

XLIX. The process of clinging and disputation etc. will originate from attachment for those who are dominated by the false cognition that is grasping at the unreal as real.

L. Those who are of excellent qualities have no position and no disputation. How could those who have no position have another's position?

LI. Whosoever has apprehended any objective position whatsoever will be caught by the deceiver - the serpent of the afflictions. Those whose minds have not apprehended an objective position will not be caught.

LII. Why will those whose minds have (apprehended) an objective position not be caught by the great poison of the afflictions, when even those who dwell in indifference will be caught by the serpent of the afflictions.

LIII. As children are attached to a reflection, perceiving it to be true, so the worldly are trapped in the prison of objects.

LIV. The Great Persons who see entities through the eye of knowledge to be like a reflection are not entangled in the mire of objects.

LV. Ordinary people desire form; middling ones are free from desire (for form); those with the excellent intelligence of knowing the nature of form are entirely freed.

LVI. Desire arises from the thought of the pleasurable; from its opposite, desire is left behind. Seeing entities as vacuous like a magical man, Nirv@%a is achieved.

LVII. Those who are affected by erroneous cognition acquire

whatsoever faults of the afflictions (exist). Those who know the meaning of the conceptions of entities and non-entities will not (acquire them).

LVIII. If an objective position existed, attachment and freedom from attachment might arise. But the Great Persons who are without an objective position have neither attachment nor freedom from attachment.

LIX. Those who think of complete vacuity are not moved even by the fickle mind. They will cross the terrible ocean of existence churned by the serpent of the afflictions.

LX. By this merit, may all sentient beings, having accumulated the heaps of merit and knowledge, attain the two highest goods (the two dimensions of Buddhahood) that arise from merit and knowledge.

Translated by the Indian abbot Mudita^r$ and the Tibetan translator Palsap Nyima Grags.

Section Three

An Explanation of Reasoning: The Sixty Stanzas Based on Candrakirti's Commentary

In his introductory remarks, Candrak$rti offers obeisance to the author of the *Yukti&a&tik@*, that is N@g@rjuna. The text, he says, dispels the two alternatives of existence and non-existence and follows the path of reasoned argument of the Conquerors. Candrak$rti undertakes to elucidate the stanzas of the text in accord with the *Madhyamaka* system of Buddhist philosophy.

The author of the text, N@g@rjuna, having seen reality, accurately in agreement with the state of Interdependent Origination has achieved extraordinary happiness. The comprehension of this truth achieved by the knowledge of Interdependent Origination leads to the accumulation of all mundane and supramundane merit without exception. It also is the source of the emergence of the Holy Personalities.

Those who possess the unobstructed knowledge of the Buddhas who have seen complete Enlightenment and known reality in all its aspects are not affected by the alternatives of origination, destruction, existence and non-existence, since Interdependent Origination is not originated in its intrinsic being. The author of the stanzas therefore proposes to elucidate Interdependent Origination which is in its intrinsic being empty. Before proceeding with this project, N@g@rjuna offers obeisance to the Buddha who is no different from Interdependent Origination.

"**I offer obeisance to the Lord of the Sages (The Buddha) who proclaimed Interdependent Origination, and who thereby avoided origination and destruction.**"

Why has the Master composed a benedictory stanza to this text, while he did not do so in the case of *Emptiness: The Seventy*

Stanzas and *The Refutation of Objections*? The answer is that *Emptiness: The Seventy Stanzas* and *The Refutation of Objections* are elaborations of *The Foundation Stanzas of the Middle Way.* They are subsidiary works and not independent treatises. Therefore, the Master did not compose separate benedictory stanzas for those texts.[5]

In this way, with reference to the following stanza contained in *The Foundation Stanzas of the Middle Way*, "The intrinsic being of entities is not in the conditions etc; as intrinsic being does not exist, how can other being exist."[6] *The Refutation of Objections* elaborates the ostensible objections to this statement and their appropriate refutations.

Similarly, in *The Foundation Stanzas of the Middle Way*, it says, "Origination, duration and destruction are demonstrated to be like an illusion, a dream and a fairy city."[7] Inasmuch as *Emptiness: The Seventy Stanzas* treats of the ostensible objections to this statement and their appropriate refutations, it is an elaboration.

Reasoning: The Sixty Stanzas, on the other hand, like *The Foundation Stanzas of the Middle Way* is principally concerned with an examination of Interdependent Origination. Therefore, it is not an elaboration of *The Foundation Stanzas of the Middle Way* but an independent work.

Those who profess substance, God, primordial matter, spirit, time and the rest and accept the origination and destruction of beings may nonetheless wish to achieve the city of Nirv@%a through abandoning all the foregoing. Still because of failing to see precisely the two truths- apparent and ultimate - they will for a very long time not be able to reach the goal of Nirv@%a which is the annihilation of Sa`s@ra. The demonstration of Interdependent Origination is the only cause of seeing rightly the two truths, therefore, all the Holy Personalities have traveled this path.

The Buddha, the unsurpassed teacher who proclaimed Interdependent Origination is foremost among the Disciples and the Private Buddhas and consequently He is regarded as **the Lord of the Sages.** But even more He is regarded as **the Lord of the Sages**, because He has proclaimed Interdependent Origination.

The Lord of the Sages who proclaims Interdependent Origination is therefore none other than the Buddha.

The demonstration of Interdependent Origination is consequently the cause of being denoted **the Lord of the Sages** and conversely, being **the Lord of the Sages** is the cause of proclaiming Interdependent Origination.

While it is true that Disciples, Private Buddhas and Bodhisattvas also can speak about Interdependent origination, this is only because the Buddha has shown the way.

Now if one says that when two things are dependent, one upon the other, neither of them is established, and further recognizes that they have no origination and destruction in their intrinsic being, then this is a description of Interdependent Origination. Moreover, this is also accepted by the Exponents of Emptiness (*/#nyav@dins).*

The Buddha is not called **the Lord of the Sages** merely because He proclaimed Interdependent Origination, but also because in this way, He put an end to the supposed origination and destruction of entities. He accomplished this through the demonstration of non-duality and so He is seen as the unsurpassable one, **the Lord of the Sages**.

Someone might object that the demonstration of Interdependent Origination does not in fact imply the negation of origination and destruction. If it is said that one's son has been born, then it is not correct to say that one's son has not been born. This is incorrect.

I. Those whose intellects have gone well beyond existence and non-existence and do not dwell (anywhere), perfectly meditate upon the meaning of the conditioned which is profound and without a support.

Those who in their past existences were familiar with Emptiness comprehend Interdependent Origination, because they have the potential to see Emptiness, even if in this present life, they have not had occasion to familiarize themselves with Emptiness. Emptiness is not the province of the childish. Emptiness is free from the obscurations of the conceptions of **existence and non-**

existence. Those who comprehend the **profound** nature of Interdependent Origination are holy. For example, merely by hearing a stanza proclaimed by the Buddha, /@riputra realized the truth. In this way, by the power of practise in past lives, the minds of some have gone beyond the perception of **existence and non-existence**. Apart from the alternatives of **existence and non-existence**, there is also no middle wherein one may wisely dwell.

Because Emptiness arouses fear in the childish, they find they are unable to penetrate it. For this reason, Emptiness is called **profound**. Phenomena do not originate in their intrinsic being, therefore, there is no object or **support** which could be conceived in terms of the alternatives of **existence and non-existence** or even a form of being mid way between the two. No object or **support** of the kind is apprehended. Those who **meditate** on the meaning of **conditioned** existence achieve direct supraknowledge. Those other than the Holy Personalities who have mistaken views and dogmas are unable to comprehend the meaning of Interdependent origination. Those who have attachment arising from the conception of intrinsic being when they hear Interdependent Origination taught, are liable to dispute with the exponents of Emptiness. Therefore, in order to discover the reasoning which may establish Emptiness, the following lines are composed. The understanding of Interdependent Origination rules out the apprehension of **existence and non-existence**.

The Holy Personalities whose minds are beyond the fabrications of **existence and non-existence**, as long as they **meditate** upon the **profound** teaching of Interdependent Origination cannot negate justifiably the apprehension of entities. If entities were altogether non-existent, they would be unapprehended like the horn of a rabbit. It has been demonstrated that sentient beings have come from a former existence to the present existence and again that they will go from this existence to another existence. The demonstration of rebirth vindicates the relationship between actions and their fruits and similarly demonstrates the non-interruption of the continuity of cyclical existence. Otherwise the demonstration of the twelve constituents of Interdependent

Origination distributed over the course of three lives will also not be appropriate. The stipulation of the aggregates, the sense spheres and elements as well as the setting down of particular and general characteristics in the Abhidharma also in that case will not be appropriate. Now if all these exist in the way in which they have been explained and are appropriate, then there exists Interdependent Origination.

II. a. (The alternative of) non-existence, the source of all defects has been utterly rejected.

Nihilists who accept the alternative of **non-existence** refuse to recognize the relationship between actions and their fruits. The consequence of this view is the destruction of the basis of all mundane and supramundane wholesome potential. Moreover, it is the cause of the accumulation of unwholesome actions. Again, the repudiation of Interdependent Origination as it is taught to occur over the course of three lives as well as the repudiation of the stipulation of the receptacle[8] of the universe as it is produced by the collective actions of all sentient beings has been rejected in the *Abhidharma*.

II. b. Do listen (as) the reasoning by which existence too is to be rejected (is explained).

Nonetheless, the alternative of **existence** is also rejected. The Buddha proclaimed that only Nirv@%a is not a deception. It is the single most excellent truth. All the compounded factors of the receptacle of the universe are only deceptions and fictions. "Alas, compounded factors are impermanent." Although the truth is none other than this, it is seldom understood through a single sentence. Therefore, the many declarations of the Lord of the Sages, the Buddha, through which He rejected the alternative of **existence** have been condensed, as it were, in this text, and the **reasoning** by which the view of **existence** is removed has been indicated. What is this **reasoning**?

III. As according to the first thought of ordinary people, entities truly exist, why is not their non-existence accepted to be the cause of liberation?

Through one-pointedness of mind, reality is comprehended

exactly. If reality is comprehended exactly, then being without attachment, one consequently achieves **liberation**.

Ordinary people also because of a perception of reality like that of the *Arhat,* through the renunciation of manifold things achieve Nirv@%a. On the other hand, one may not hold that as in the case of the *Arhat,* **liberation** is achieved through the perception of the **non-existence** of all phenomena. Nonetheless, **liberation** will not be achieved through following the way of the ignorant and wrong minded people. Thus, those who cling to the view of existence are unable to perceive reality. In this context, the *The King of Absorption Discourse* (*Sam@dhir@jas#tra*) declares that, the eye, ear and nose are not logically sustainable, nor are the tongue, body or mind logically sustainable. If these faculties were logically sustainable, what would be the use of the Holy Path? Thus all these faculties are not logically sustainable. Therefore, one who wishes to be liberated should follow the Holy Path. All these factors are fabricated by erroneous perception or ideation. They do not exist ultimately. The conception that these unoriginated factors exist really is erroneously constructed.

Why is the perception of these factors not the perception of reality? In the same text, it says that all compounded and uncompounded factors are neither true nor false. The excellent, mediocre and inferior factors need not be practised. All these factors are not originated. Though one searches for them, they are not perceived,. They are all non-existent and forever empty. This is the province of the wise.

The view of **non-existence** is the cause of rebirth in inferior states and is the source of all defects. The view of existence too however is the province of **ordinary people**. It is the cause of achieving rebirth in superior states and the cause of experiencing happiness throughout ones rebirths. Therefore, both the views of existence and **non-existence** are the cause of experiencing rebirth in Sa ` s@ra - be it in states of woe or in states of happiness.

IV. a. (The view of) existence does not achieve liberation from becoming, nor does (the view of) non-existence.

Impurity is not cleansed through impurity. Therefore, these two views of **existence** and **non-existence** are the cause of Sa`s@ra, and through them **liberation** from cyclical existence cannot be gained.

Thus by means of the views of **existence** and **non-existence**, one cannot achieve **liberation** from the factors and the sense spheres. Then, it may be asked, by means of what sort of view can *yogins* be liberated?

IV. b. The Great Person is freed through the complete understanding of (the interdependence of) existence and non-existence.

Without depending upon **existence**, **non-existence** cannot be established. Both **existence and non-existence** in fact are not established in their intrinsic being. Therefore, knowing **existence and non-existence** means knowing that they both do not exist and are not established in their intrinsic being. Those who understand this are distinguished from the ordinary run of men, therefore they are called **Great Persons**. They abide in the supraknowledge which is unsupported or without an object of mind. Alternatively, they may also be referred to as Holy Personalities. The attachment etc. which arises from the conception of the marks of **existence and non-existence** is the cause of not going beyond the three spheres of the phenomenal universe. Ordinary people are bound in just this way. They are rendered powerless by the conceptions of **existence and non-existence** and consequently, they circle throughout the five realms[9] of cyclical existence. The habit of attachment etc. is broken when the conception of the marks of **existence and non-existence** does not arise, i.e., when **existence and non-existence** are not apprehended. When the habit of attachment is broken one achieves liberation.

Now suppose someone says that **existence and non-existence** are facts, because if they did not exist, then Sa`s@ra and Nirv@%a also would be fictions. Sa`s@ra is of the nature of the substance of the five appropriating aggregates, so it has the nature of **existence**. Because of the afflictions, sentient beings wander through the various realms. This wandering is called Sa`s@ra, the

cycle or wheel of existence. It exists and therefore **existence** is also a fact. Liberation, on the other hand, is beyond this. Its nature is the discontinuation of Sa`s@ra. Liberation implies the non-reoccurrence of suffering, and it is of the nature of **non-existence**. Therefore, that being or entity which is not Sa`s@ra, that is Nirv@%a also is a possible fact. If Sa`s@ra and Nirv@%a are facts, and they exist, then **existence and non-existence** will also be established. However, these two are not facts and do not exist.

Then, do you think the Blessed One did not proclaim these two? Indeed, He taught the Dharma in order to eliminate Sa`s@ra and achieve Nirv@%a. If Sa`s@ra and Nirv@%a did not exist, the teaching of the Blessed One would be useless, but it is not useless. Thus Sa`s@ra and Nirv@%a both exist and therefore, **existence and non-existence** are also established.

Then, to whom did the Blessed One teach Sa`s@ra and Nirv@%a? He did so to the Holy Personalities of course. Well, if the Blessed One taught Sa`s@ra and Nirv@%a to the Holy Personalities, then inasmuch as they had already achieved the status of Holy Personalities, they can hardly be said to have needed to achieve that status through that teaching. Now if you say that they were taught Sa`s@ra and Nirv@%a, because they were on the way to becoming Holy Personalities, then in that case, they would have to become Holy Personalities through the process of hearing, considering and so forth. In that case, the teaching is for those who are not yet Holy Personalities. Those who have not yet achieved the status of Holy Personalities are very familiar with the view of **existence** through their experience of Sa`s@ra from beginningless time. Therefore, if as a corrective to this habit, the most excellent state, Nirv@%a, which is characterized by opposition to Sa`s@ra is not demonstrated, attachment to **existence** cannot be removed. Therefore, Sa`s@ra and Nirv@%a were demonstrated not for the sake of the Holy Personalities, but for ordinary people.

V. a. Those who do not see suchness are attached to the world and Nirv@%a, ...

When one does not see **suchness**, that is Sa`s@ra. **Nirv@%a** is called the opposite of **the world** or of worldly existence. The two

of them, Sa ` s@ra and **Nirv@%a**, are mutually opposed antidotes to each other. One of them is meant to be removed and the other is to be acquired.

V. b. ...but those who see suchness are not attached to the world and Nirv@%a.

Those who are called Holy Personalities are distinguished by the realization of the unsupported Dharma. They neither perceive existence nor non-existence. Therefore, Sa ` s@ra and **Nirv@%a** have been demonstrated for the sake of ordinary people. Consequently, the contention that both existence and non-existence are facts is not sustainable from the ultimate point of view.

But if Sa ` s@ra and **Nirv@%a** were not demonstrated to the Holy Personalities, how can the teaching of the Four Noble Truths be appropriate? If the truths are real for the Holy Personalities, then they can be called Holy or Noble Truths. Then the name Holy Truths will be appropriate. If, however, the Four Holy Truths are associated by you with those who are not Holy Personalities, then their being called Holy Truths is not appropriate. Then the name, the Holy Eightfold Path, also will not be appropriate, because it is not for the Holy Personalities.

These terms, or conventional usages are marred by impurities and belong to **the world**, you may say. But in that case, whatever worldly entities are to be found may also be called Holy even if they do not alter their worldly nature. Otherwise, the truths which make one Holy are called the Holy Truths.

There are in fact two kinds of objects or supports: erroneous and non-erroneous. In the case of an erroneous object or support, one regards phenomena as a source of happiness. Even apparently, that is according to the apparent truth, factors do not have that nature. On the other hand, suffering etc. are examples of non-erroneous objects or supports. Even according to the apparent truth, all phenomena have the nature of suffering. It is in this sense that the term Holy is applied to the Four Holy Truths.

So then, do you really mean to say that you think **Nirv@%a** belongs to the realm of conventional or apparent truth? Yes, of course, if one entertains the conception of Sa ` s@ra, so one also

entertains the conception of **Nirv@%a**, because both of them are worldly conventions. Therefore, in the Perfection of Wisdom Discourses, it is said that **Nirv@%a** is like an illusion and a dream. Moreover, if there existed anything superior to **Nirv@%a**, that too would be like an illusion and a dream. If **Nirv@%a** did not depend upon the conception of Sa ` s@ra, then it would not be of the nature of illusion. However, inasmuch as it is dependent upon the conception of Sa ` s@ra, **Nirv@%a** also belongs to the realm of apparent truth.

Then, if what you say is true, how is it that **Nirv@%a** is called ultimate truth? This appellation is meant not to deceive ordinary people. According to conventional usage, it is called ultimate truth. Whatever is deceptive, compounded or conditioned is not ultimate truth. Very well, grant it that three of the Four Holy Truths refer to the conditioned universe and are deceptive by nature, but did not the Blessed One declare to the monks that only **Nirv@%a** has the nature of not being deceptive? Conditioned phenomena appear deceptively and lead ordinary people astray, **Nirv@%a**, however, is not thus. **Nirv@%a**, forever, remains in the form of non-origination. Therefore, **Nirv@%a** which always remains just what it is, is called in the conventions of **the world**, ultimate truth. Nonetheless, the Holy Personalities who perceive the ultimate, neither perceive Sa ` s@ra nor **Nirv@%a**. Consequently, for one who has seen **suchness**, there is no assumption of either Sa ` s@ra or **Nirv@%a**.

Why then is it said that the Holy Personalities who have seen the ultimate truth neither perceive Sa ` s@ra nor **Nirv@%a**?

VI. a. Becoming and Nirv@%a - neither of these is existent; ...

Becoming is co-extensive with the five appropriating aggregates. Inasmuch as they are interdependently originated, they do not exist in their intrinsic being, like a reflection. If the world of **becoming**, that is the five appropriating aggregates does not exist, then surely the non-existence of non-entities is impossible. Therefore, both **becoming and Nirv@%a** are impossible. The perception of non-existence is not the perception of suchness. If you

think that, then even those afflicted by cataracts will consequently perceive the truth, it is not so. The Holy Personalities have perceived reality. They have not perceived non-existence. If, indeed, **Nirv@%a** were nothing at all, then how can it be stipulated that the Holy Personalities achieve **Nirv@%a**?

VI. b. ...the complete understanding of becoming may be called Nirv@%a.

Through **the complete understanding** of the fact that non-origination is the characteristic of **becoming,** all signs are abandoned or prevented. When this state of being is associated with conventional truth, it is called **Nirv@%a**. **Nirv@%a** is none other than the non-establishment of anything in its intrinsic being. For example, even impermanence cannot be established solely with reference to non-existence. Without depending upon existence too, impermanence is not valid. Similarly, without depending upon an illusory entity, the conception of **Nirv@%a** cannot be acquired.

VII. As with regard to the extinction of a formerly originated entity, cessation is imputed, so too, the Holy Ones consider cessation (to be like) a magical creation.

When the impermanence of an **originated entity** is non-existent, then through this there is no establishment of intrinsic being. If an **entity** were existent without depending upon another **entity**, it could be seen to exist in its intrinsic being. **The Holy Ones** do not perceive anything that is established in its intrinsic being. When such entities are analyzed with wisdom, they are found to be like an illusory elephant in a magical show, non-existent in their intrinsic being. Whatever is non-existent in its intrinsic being and whatever is unoriginated is called Nirv@%a. Nirv@%a is established depending upon an illusion, just as in the conventions of the world there is the stipulation of impermanence. In this way, it is proved that Sa`s@ra and Nirv@%a do not exist in their intrinsic being. Thus when one has understood the nature of entities to be unapprehended or without support, this is Nirv@%a.

VIII. By means of complete destruction (of the afflictions and actions) cessation will arise, not by means of complete understanding of compounded factors, (but) by

whom will it be directly experienced (and) what will the knowledge of that destruction be like?

What is meant here by **destruction**? If all factors of experience which are similar to a magical illusion are not apprehended and not originated, that is not Nirv@%a. On the contrary, the subsequent non-origination of form and the like consequent upon the **destruction** of the afflictions and actions is Nirv@%a. In this case, by interrupting the continuity of the nature of entities, Nirv@%a is achieved. Therefore, Nirv@%a is not achieved through the **understanding** of **compounded factors**.

The view stated above, however, is not correct. Through seeing suchness, **cessation** is clearly perceived. If **cessation** or Nirv@%a at a time when the aggregates are not cut off does not exist, on the other hand, when the aggregates are cut off, then by whom will **cessation** or Nirv@%a be **directly experienced**? So long as the continuity of the aggregates exists, there can be Holy personalities who perceive suchness as in the case of the Holy /@riputra. Then, it will be correct to say that **cessation** or Nirv@%a is **directly experienced** by some one. Now, if some one should ask what is it that is **directly experienced** by such a Holy Personality upon seeing suchness? Even though it may not yet be **directly experienced**, still through knowing the reasoning well, it is eventually **directly experienced**.

The direct experience of Nirv@%a follows from the teaching of the Master of *Yogins* and is not adulterated by imagination or speculative construction. Moreover, it is altogether without the superimposition of objects. Merely seeing an object is not appropriate in the state of **cessation**. The existence of an entity which has a particular characteristic mark becomes familiar through the general characteristics. Then gradually, through meditation, supraknowledge arises. Whatever entity is apprehended by the supraknowledge which is without speculative construction has the nature of being free from superimposition. It has just its own particular characteristic. In this way, if one is able to understand impermanence which is empty of the alternatives of antecedence and subsequence, one can penetrate mere being. Thus,

there exists an object which is an unique particular or which has a particular characteristic, like the consciousness which perceives only blue and the like. Therefore, it may be said that direct experience is like the consciousness which perceives just a patch of blue and the like.

Now here the distinction between general and particular characteristics has been accepted. The object whose nature is of the form of a general characteristic, when it is meditated upon, is not rightly an object with a particular characteristic. The absurd consequence of this is that the name is unrelated to the object.

In the state of **cessation**, there does not exist even the minutest particle of an entity which is the **cessation** of suffering. Despite this, how can there be an object of direct perception? Therefore, it is said that the **knowledge** of the non-origination of suffering is direct experience. It is not possible for cognition to cause the state of non-origination to arise. If like the cognition, the object has the nature of non-origination, then as the two are similar, it may be appropriate. In the world too, this kind of representation is known as direct experience.

The following parable may be used to explain the case. Suppose a traveler sees in the distance a river. He wants to cross the river, but he does not know how to do so, and he is moreover afraid of being unable to do so. Therefore, he asks a farmer who belongs to that country, how deep the water is? The farmer answers that there is no water at all. Although it may appear to be a river, it is in fact a mirage. If you do not believe what I say, says the farmer, go and see for your self. Then my words will turn into direct experience. In this way, the farmer demonstrates the non-existence of the water to the traveler. Similarly, my words also turn into direct experience. Likewise, non-existence and non-perception in the conventions of the world turn into direct experience. Therefore, in the apparent truth of the world, the cognition of non-apprehension or non-perception may be called direct experience without fear of contradiction. When the meaning of the entity which produces cognition has been penetrated, it is called direct experience. This parable from the Discourses of the Buddha is to the

point.

On the other hand, the condition wherein the continuity of the aggregates is cut off is nothing at all. By whom will this **cessation** be **directly experienced**? It is said that birth is at an end, the religious life led, that what had to be done has been done and that there is no further rebirth; but the cognition that puts an end to birth also is not appropriate. When an entity is non-existent, it is said that the entity is destroyed and that there is no further birth. As long as there persists the continuity of the aggregates produced by causes and conditions, so long there exists birth. One cannot comprehend the **destruction** of this condition.

In regard to the reference to the discourses, "beyond this, there is no further birth", if it refers to the non-perception of a future birth, in that case too,

IX. If the aggregates are not cut off, even though the afflictions be exhausted, going beyond will not occur. When they are cut off, then liberation occurs.

In the discourses, it is said that when the cessation of the **aggregates** occurs, Nirv@%a is gained. Nirv@%a is described in various ways. It is said that therein, all suffering has been left behind, that it is purified, destroyed or **exhausted**, free from attachment, extinguished, pacified, not associated with another arising of suffering and not born again. Further, Nirv@%a is called peace, the most excellent and the abandonment of all **aggregates**.

Some say, even at the present moment, if the **aggregates** are not **cut off**, one cannot see Nirv@%a. But if one sees the non-origination of the conditioned or the state of suffering, then at that time, one does not perceive origination. Suffering will be destroyed. Others do not accept this. They contend that at that time Nirv@%a is not gained. But the Blessed One has proclaimed two kinds of Nirv@%a: Nirv@%a along with the **aggregates** and Nirv@%a without the **aggregates**. If the Nirv@%a along with the **aggregates** is nonetheless free from the bondage of the **afflictions**, then the Nirv@%a along with the **aggregates** is free from the bondage of attachment and so forth.

Suffering, the origination of suffering and the world are

generally recognized to be synonymous with the five appropriating **aggregates**. Even if this may be generally acceptable, sometimes a general definition may be used in a particular way.

If one refuses to accept that the non-origination of suffering is Nirv@%a, then consequently the **afflictions** will not be negated by cutting through the bondage of attachment and the like. Then one will have the condition of the perception of the view of real individuality, because through the perception of this view, attachment and the like arise and **liberation** cannot be achieved.

The cause of the arising of the **afflictions** is the perception of the **aggregates**. So long as it exists, the **afflictions** will continue to be present. Consequently, there will be no possibility of putting an end to the **aggregates**. The **afflictions** also act as a cause which has its effect. Actions originate from the cause of the **afflictions**. Since the continuity which arises from actions which have the **afflictions** as their cause too is not ended, therefore **liberation** which is characterized by the cutting off of the **aggregates** will not be possible. Similarly, the idea of the end of rebirth which is associated with the **aggregates** in a future period is also impossible. Therefore, birth is said to be destroyed.

Now, it has been shown that for those who maintain the existence of being, **liberation** is altogether impossible. Moreover, it will be shown how on the contrary it is possible for those who maintain Emptiness.

X. When what is originated from the condition of ignorance is analyzed through perfect knowledge, no perception at all of either origination or cessation occurs.

When it is said, **originated from the condition of ignorance**, it refers to the conditioning of volitions, consciousness and the like. While the direct cause or condition is said to be **ignorance**, indirectly and implicitly, the aggregates of volition and consciousness are also conditions.

While **ignorance** is the direct **condition** of volitions, it is the indirect **condition** of consciousness. If volitions etc., the objects **originated from the condition of ignorance** are established in their own right, then since they are established in their own right,

they will not need to depend upon **ignorance**.

When it is seen that the appearance of these factors is like the appearance of hairs before the eyes of one who suffers from a fault of vision, then the **perception** of existence in its intrinsic being will cease. Those whose vision is pure, who so to speak do not suffer from a fault of vision, do not perceive hair etc. nor do they perceive **origination**. When something exists through imagination, like hair etc., and is subsequently removed, then following its removal, it can no longer be found. Similarly, if volitions and the rest were established in their intrinsic being, then when the supraknowledge of analysis arises within the person of pure vision, they could not be destroyed or dispelled.

Moreover, in that case, the **cessation** of **ignorance** would not affect the existence of volitions and the rest. In that case, the **cessation** of **ignorance** would also not necessarily imply the **cessation** of volitions. When perfect supraknowledge has arisen, the hair etc. which is perceived because of a fault of vision ceases to be visible.

Now although volitions and the rest originate like the hair etc. which is perceived as the consequence of a fault of vision and then ceases to be perceived, so too when perfect supraknowledge arises, there is no **perception** whatsoever of the **origination** or **cessation** of volitions and the rest. When neither the **origination** nor the **cessation** of Interdependent **Origination** is perceived, then Nirv@%a is achieved in this very life.

XI.a. When, in this life, one is beyond sorrow and has done what had to be done,

The *yogin* who develops the supraknowledge of the non-perception of all factors achieves Nirv@%a **in this life**. The occasion when the supraknowledge is present which perceives neither origination nor cessation is called liberation **in this life**.

The other scriptural references to the ending of birth, the preservation of the religious life, the accomplishment of **what had to be done** and the avoidance of birth in the future should be understood in this way. They refer to the non-origination of Interdependent Origination. Otherwise, if one strays from the

reality characterized by the non-perception of the origination and cessation of Interdependent Origination and imagines that the perceived entities exist in their intrinsic being, then entities will have mutually distinct independent being. In that case, however, one would have to ascertain the nature of the distinction.

Well, it may be said that by knowing the nature of one entity, the nature of another entity cannot be penetrated. For instance, by knowing the nature of blue, one is not able to penetrate the nature of yellow.

XI.b & XII. if after the nature of factors is realized a distinction exists, those who impute origination even in regard to very subtle entities, being unwise, have not seen the meaning of conditioned origination.

The **nature of factors** which occurs in the stanza means Nirv@%a. The actuality or essence of Nirv@%a is not different from Interdependent Origination. After all, it is also said in the discourses that one who sees Interdependent Origination, sees the Dharma. The wisdom of the non-differentiation of Interdependent Origination and liberation is called realizing or understanding the **nature of factors**, that is equivalent to gaining Nirv@%a. Therefore, it is also said in *The Foundation Stanzas of the Middle Way* that Interdependent Origination is of the nature of pacification.[10]

At this point, the meaning of Interdependent Origination is explained in the following way. The origination of **entities** is not an actual origination. Inasmuch as suffering also participates in Interdependent Origination, it is not originated in its intrinsic being. Because it is not originated in its intrinsic being, it is known as Nirv@%a. Therefore, both, that is Interdependent Origination and Nirv@%a are unoriginated in their intrinsic being. Consequently, it is said in *The Foundation Stanzas of the Middle Way* that there is nothing which distinguishes Sa`s@ra from Nirv@%a, nor is there anything that distinguishes Nirv@%a from Sa`s@ra. The limit of Nirv@%a is also the limit of Sa`s@ra. There is not even the subtlest difference between these two.[11] The term "limit" or perhaps better, summit means excellence and this in turn signifies most superior.

Sa`s@ra and Nirv@%a are one. Therefore, because Nirv@%a does not possess any distinction, Interdependent Origination is called the Dharma. Through perceiving Interdependent Origination, one can perceive Nirv@%a, therefore, one who has seen Interdependent Origination has seen the Dharma. Moreover, inasmuch as the actuality or **nature of factors** and the Blessed Buddha are not distinguishable, that is to say, they are not different, the perception of the **nature of factors** amounts to the perception of the Buddha. In this way too, through the cognition which perceives factors in terms of the non-origination of Interdependent Origination, the basis of the three truths: the truths of suffering, its cause and the path as well as the actual non-origination of Interdependent Origination and the reality of Nirv@%a are found to be only one single realization. The substance of the comprehension of the truth of suffering is the comprehension of the non-origination and non-cessation of suffering which participates in the factors of experience that are perceived or appear because of Interdependent Origination. The understanding of the truth of the cause is none other than the understanding of the non-origination and non-cessation of the afflictions and actions. The understanding of the truth of cessation is none other than the understanding of the non-origination and non-cessation of Interdependent Origination. Finally, the understanding of the truth of the path is also just the understanding of the actuality of non-origination and non-cessation, because the path also is just Interdependent Origination. In this way, in an instant of understanding the **nature of factors**, one has seen Interdependent Origination and therefore there is no possibility of seeing another unprecedented truth.

Well, in that case, how do you go about arranging the fifteen moments of the path of seeing?[12] Anyway, some groups do not accept the fifteen moments of the path of seeing. They hold that there is only a single realization. This interpretation does not contradict the theory of those who hold this opinion. As for those who assert the existence of fifteen moments, even in their case, the division of a cognition which is essentially one is undertaken with a view to cultivating and benefiting people. Therefore, a cognition

whose nature is essentially one is divided into fifteen parts. If that is so, then the same thing may be said with regard to other stipulations like the sixteen aspects of meditation upon the path. They are all stipulated merely through the activity of mental fabrication. In reality, the realization is essentially one.

If following upon the realization of the **nature of factors**, there exists a **distinction** to be made, the object or support of that **distinction** is imputed or imagined in another form. As the **unwise impute** origination in their intrinsic being even with regard to very **subtle entities**, they do not know the meaning of Interdependent Origination which does not originate in its intrinsic being and which is an object which is of one taste. It has been seen that the meaning of Interdependent origination is characterized by unity or oneness. Dwelling upon the cognition of the perception of the actuality of Interdependent Origination, once ignorance has been completely removed. Through step by step meditation, one has done what had to be done and one has achieved Nirv@%a in this life.

Then according to your system,

XIII. If Sa ` s@ra is turned back by the monk who has exhausted the afflictions, why was not its beginning demonstrated by the Perfect Buddha?

If supraknowledge can remove **afflictions**, then it can also remove actions, because they will not possess causes and conditions. Circling in **Sa ` s@ra** from beginningless time, one has experienced birth and death continuously again and again. If the continuity of form and the rest, in other words, the aggregates which are established in their intrinsic being is **turned back** or removed, why did not the Buddhas explain the **beginning** of this continuity?

Perhaps the Buddha did not proclaim it for the following reasons. He should have explained the **beginning** and the end of the continuity of the aggregates. It might be thought that He did not do so, because He did not know, or perhaps for another reason. But the Buddha is accepted to be the Omniscient One, so it is impossible that He did not know.

If it is said that like the rungs of a water wheel, there is no **beginning**, therefore, the Buddha did not proclaim a **beginning**,

then in that case, as there is no **beginning**, there is also no end. The case may be illustrated with the help of the examples of a wheel and the like.

XIV. a. If there were a beginning, then definitely a view would also be adopted, ...

If one superimposes the notion of a **beginning**, then Sa ` s@ra would have a **beginning**. But if the **beginning** of Sa ` s@ra is accepted, then you will have to accept that Sa ` s@ra is without a cause and consequently, an erroneous **view** will arise. Those of us who profess the doctrine of Interdependent Origination do not make this mistake. Whoever accepts Interdependent Origination also holds that entities are not originated in their intrinsic being. In order to demonstrate that their **beginning** and end cannot be superimposed or constructed, it is said,

XIV. b. ...(but) how is it that what is interdependently originated has a beginning and an end?

Moreover, if Sa ` s@ra had a **beginning**, then it would not have an **end**. If Sa ` s@ra were originated in its intrinsic being, then it could not change into something else, in other words, it could not become non-existent. In that case, Sa ` s@ra would be eternal. In order to demonstrate this, the following couplet is advanced.

XV.a. How can what was earlier originated again be turned back?

In other words, if something did not change its intrinsic being, then it would be eternal. If, however, it is accepted that entities originate from the absence of intrinsic being, then if there were a beginning, then definitely a view would be adopted. If, on the other hand, entities **originated** from non-existence, rather than from the absence of intrinsic being, they would consequently be without cause and conditions. In other words, their origination if they were **originated** from non-existence would be without cause.

But then there is also a view according to which factors are uncaused. If one is associated with this point of view, then one acquires the defect of nihilism.

So long as Interdependent Origination obtains, where is there an antecedent state, and where is there a subsequent state,

inasmuch as factors are not originated in their intrinsic being. In this way, interdependently originated entities are not **originated** in their intrinsic being. Therefore, without doubt,

XV. b. Free from the alternatives of antecedence and subsequence, cyclical existence appears like a magical illusion.

For example, a magician who practises his magical arts through magical syllables produces an elephant, horse or man, but they do not exist in their intrinsic being. They are merely appearances of an elephant etc. In regard to the magically created elephant, there is no reason to speculate about its antecedent state and its subsequent state in the way that one might in regard to a real elephant or in the way in which those who believe it to be a real elephant might speculate about its antecedent and subsequent state. In regard to the appearance of Interdependent Origination also, one ought not to speculate or construct **the alternatives of antecedence and subsequence**.

Therefore, not holding still even for an instant, the wheel of **cyclical existence** has to roll on. Because its appearance is deceptive, this is called **magical illusion**. Those who are deceived with regard to the nature of appearance are taken in by its fascination.

XVI. When a magical illusion is supposed to originate, or when it is (supposed to be) destroyed, one who knows about it is not deluded, (but) one who is ignorant about it will be greatly affected emotionally.

For example, when through the power of the magical syllables of a magician, a lovely young woman is created, perfected in all the accomplishments of the courtesan's art, she is found to be most attractive. One who is not wise with regard to the nature of this appearance supposes the lovely young woman to exist in reality and is delighted by her. The unwise fantasize regarding such a **magical illusion**. Similarly, those who are **ignorant** regarding the nature of insubstantiality fantasize regarding entities which they mistakenly believe to exist in reality. The magician, however, those who know that the **magical illusion** does not exist in reality are

not **deluded** or deceived. The things of the world also, for the practised *yogin*, are similar to a **magical illusion**.

XVII. Those who see the world of existence with intelligence as like a mirage and a magical illusion are not entirely corrupted by the view of the alternative of antecedence and the alternative of subsequence.

The *yogin* sees the whole **world** of conditioned cyclical **existence** as similar to a **mirage** and a **magical illusion** by means of his own wisdom and right knowledge. Ultimately, he apprehends nothing at all. Whatever be the nature of entities, he is not deluded by the alternatives of **antecedence** and **subsequence**. Such a *yogin* is not subject to erroneous views.

Others, like the unwise, who are attached to an illusory young woman give up the path of the knowledge of insubstantiality along which all the Holy Personalities have trod.

XVIII. Whosoever imputes origination and destruction to compounded factors does not at all know the movement of the wheel of Interdependent Origination.

Those who impute the **origination** and **destruction** of **compounded factors** fail completely to understand **Interdependent Origination** in which there is neither beginning, middle or end, as in the case of the circle of the whirling fire brand. It is impossible for **compounded factors** to originate and to cease in their intrinsic being. Nonetheless, some assume their **origination** and **destruction**. Therefore, it is said that they do not understand and have not penetrated the meaning or **movement of the wheel of Interdependent Origination**.

Now, suppose someone asks why the acceptance of **origination** and **destruction** in reality necessarily means one has not understood the meaning of **Interdependent Origination**?

XIX. Whatsoever originates dependent upon this and that does not originate in its intrinsic being. How can what is not originated in its intrinsic being be called originated?

The reference in the stanza to being **dependent** upon **this and that** is intended to suggest all possible conditions in general, from subjective ignorance to the sphere of air which is usually

thought to be external or objective. In other words, **this and that** refer to any entity which abiding as a cause forms the basis for the origination of another entity. If whatever arises **dependent** upon **this and that** cause **originated** in its **intrinsic being**, then it should exist absolutely. But, an entity whose nature is established even at the time of origination would not depend upon the entity which is the supposed cause of its origination. If the entities which are supposed to **originate** do not exist in their **intrinsic being** prior to their origination, then their origination is like the appearance of a reflection. It would appear that they do not exist in their **intrinsic being**, that is to say, they do not exist substantially.

Very well, it may be right to insist that they do not **originate** in their **intrinsic being**, but they are **originated** conventionally. Conventionally, form **originates**, feeling **originates** and so forth. Consequently, it may be supposed by someone that origination exists. Then, alas, such a one has entered the wrong path. The wise man whose intelligence conforms to the facts through analytical reasoning knows that what is not **originated** in its **intrinsic being** cannot be called **originated** at all.

Look here, the defining characteristic proper to earth is impenetrability. If earth is not **originated** in its **intrinsic being**, that is along with its own defining characteristic, then is it **originated** along with the defining characteristic of liquidity? Surely that would be inappropriate.

Indeed, the origination of factors from self and other is equally impossible. Things are not **originated** along with their own defining characteristic, nor are they **originated** along with another's defining characteristic. Therefore, the non-origination of entities is proven.

Thus, having demonstrated the impossibility of substantial origination with reference to Interdependent Origination, now the impossibility of actual cessation will be demonstrated.

XX. Because of the extinction of the cause (of becoming), peace is imputed to be "extinction" (but) as there is nothing which is extinguished in its intrinsic being, how can it be called "extinction?"

When an originated entity exists, the duration of that entity is the consequence of conditions. If the conditions for its continuation do not exist, it will be destroyed. Therefore, when the **cause** of the existence of the world is **extinguished**, there obtains **peace** and Nirv@%a. That is perceived as **extinction** or cessation. If the conditions which sustain existence in the world do not exist, cyclical existence will be **extinguished**. Therefore the **extinction** of cyclical existence depends upon the non-existence of the conditions which sustain it. Therefore, the **extinction** of cyclical existence is not established in its **intrinsic being**.

If anything were **extinguished** in its **intrinsic being**, then that extinction would not depend upon conditions. In that case, that **extinction** would not be regarded as conditioned. In other words, such a cessation would not be experienced consequent upon the **extinction** of the causes of cyclical existence. Therefore, in that case, even without the absence of the afflictions and actions which are the causes of cyclical existence, Nirv@%a would arise. Consequently, this would mean that one can achieve liberation without any effort. As it is not correct to believe that an oil lamp can be finally **extinguished** even without the exhaustion of the oil and the wick, so there is no **extinction** which is established in its **intrinsic being**.

In this way, non-origination also will be acceptable as a **cause**. The extinction which follows upon the non-existence of the **cause** would have to be accepted as the **extinction** of cyclical existence. Those who hold that the cessation of an entity is dependent upon the **extinction** of the **cause** consequently hold that cessation does not depend upon an entity, since the ostensible **cause** is a non-entity like a sky flower. If, because of the non-existence of an entity, an earthen pot and the like does not participate in Interdependent Origination, the non-existence of an entity also depends upon the existence of an entity.

Now, if it is asked how one can call non-existence a **cause**? It is replied, how can existence also be called a **cause**? So long as the seed exists, the entity which is the sprout is not cognized. Only when the seed becomes non-existent is it considered the **cause** of

the sprout. For instance, the passage into non-existence of the preceding consciousness is accepted to be the immediately preceding condition (*samanantarapratyaya*) of the subsequent consciousness. So long as the preceding consciousness exists, it cannot be called the **cause** of the subsequent consciousness, because two moments of consciousness cannot exist simultaneously. Moreover, the notion of some kind of intermediate condition of consciousness half way between existence and non-existence is unacceptable.

Now, some people hold that the cessation of the preceding **cause** functions as the condition of the origination of the effect. In this way too, it is possible for non-existence in the form of the cessation of the preceding **cause** to function as a **cause**. Therefore, it is not sustainable to claim that non-existence cannot function as a **cause**. Even if it is said that when analyzed logically, it cannot possibly be a **cause**, it is not so. The things of the world which participate in the conventions of the world should not be accepted following analysis, but rather they should be accepted following the common usages found among men. In the world also, it is seen that non-existence is called a **cause**. For example, it is well known that because of the absence, that is the non-existence of water, the grain is damaged or ruined. Again, it is said that because of the absence or non-existence of food, ones son has died. All worldly conventions are to be recognized without difficulty according to their acceptance and popularity in the world. They need not be recognized rationally. The absence of water etc. is commonly called the **cause** of destruction and death. Therefore, the **extinction** of the **cause** is stipulated to be **extinction**. **Extinction** then cannot possibly exist before the **extinction** of the **cause**. Therefore, it has no real essence established by itself, that is to say, in its **intrinsic being**. Whatever is not **extinguished** in its **intrinsic being**, is also not dependent upon a **cause**, for whatever is not **extinguished** in its **intrinsic being** can hardly be **extinguished** in another's **intrinsic being**. **Extinction** and non-extinction have disparate natures. Therefore, just as origination is not possible in the **intrinsic being** of entities and in the extrinsic being of entities, so **extinction** is similarly impossible in the **intrinsic being** of

entities and in the extrinsic being of entities. The *yogin* who has known precisely the meaning of Interdependent Origination sees neither the origination nor the cessation of anything.

XXI. Therefore, nothing at all originates and nothing at all ceases. The path of origination and destruction was demonstrated intentionally.

Then why was the path of **origination** and **destruction** leading to Nirv@%a demonstrated? Although the Blessed Buddha has uttered such words, He did not proclaim these in terms of their being established in their intrinsic being. Despite **origination** and **destruction** not existing in their intrinsic being, the Buddha taught the world Interdependent Origination. **Origination** and **destruction** were taught by Him **intentionally**, that is to say, with a purpose in mind. The Blessed One demonstrated the path of **origination** and **destruction** in order to fulfill the needs of certain disciples.

Now, it may be asked what is the purpose of demonstrating the path of **origination** and **destruction**?

XXII. Through knowing origination, destruction is known; through knowing destruction, impermanence is known; through knowing the way to penetrate impermanence, the Holy Dharma is also understood.

Attachment to compounded factors obstructs the path that leads to the city of Nirv@%a. As a corrective for this attachment, the Blessed Buddha has provisionally demonstrated the path of **origination** and **destruction**.

It is said that through knowing **origination**, **destruction** is also known, because **origination** is the foundation or basis of **destruction**. Further, through knowing **destruction**, one can penetrate the significance of **destruction**, that is to say, **impermanence**. Whoever finds himself within the burning flames of the transitory three spheres of existence like one trapped inside a burning house, but wishes to escape from this situation will surely be freed by the knowledge of Interdependent Origination. If such a person penetrates the truth of non-origination and non-destruction, he can realize the profound truth of Nirv@%a by means of this

understanding. Therefore, by means of developing ones awareness through the stages of **origination**, **destruction** and so forth one can realize the **Holy Dharma**.

XXIII. Those who know that Interdependent Origination is well clear of origination and destruction cross the ocean of worldly existence that is born of views.

As there is no **origination**, so there are no **views** or dogmas of being etc. Further, if there is neither **origination** nor **destruction**, then there is no intrinsic characteristic or mark, that is to say, no self nature.

If one perceives neither the **origination** nor the **destruction** of **Interdependent Origination**, one will cross the ocean of cyclical existence that is **born of views** and dogmas.

One who strives to understand Emptiness will surely cross the ocean of existence by means of the great vessel of Emptiness. Those who fear Emptiness are not able to avoid falling into the two alternatives of **origination** and **destruction** with respect to **Interdependent Origination.**

XXIV. Ordinary people who have the notion of the substantiality of entities as they are flawed by the erroneous views of existence and non-existence and controlled by the afflictions are deceived by their own minds.

Ordinary people (*p=thagjana*) literally individual people, are so called because they are born individually in accordance with their **afflictions** and their actions. Those who grasp at the view that a substance or essence abides in **entities** possess the notion of the **substantiality** of **entities**, because they cling to the idea of a self or substance in things. Otherwise, they are attached to **entities**. They are controlled by and are subject to the **afflictions** that are generated by the superimposition of the **erroneous views** of **existence** and **non-existence**. They become attached to **entities** which they consider pleasant, while in regard to **entities** which they consider unpleasant, they produce aversion or hatred. Their conduct is therefore determined by the **afflictions**. Accumulating wholesome and unwholesome actions, they circle in Sa`s@ra. In this way, **ordinary people** who are attached to

entities are deceived by their own minds. Their attachment to **entities** is superimposed by their own minds, since the intrinsic being of **entities** is not established, that is, it is not independently valid. Therefore, the vision of the reality of **entities** is obscured from such **ordinary people**. As they superimpose **erroneous views** upon the real state of things, they are deceived by their own minds. Those who do not fear the teaching of a friend of virtue (*kaly@namitra)* but regard it as demonstrating the ultimate nature of factors of experience and leading to the city of Nirv@%a realizing perfectly the deceptive nature of the mind and freeing themselves from its sway should surely be considered Holy Personalities.

XXV. Those who are wise in regard to entities see that entities are impermanent, deceptive factors, pithless, empty, insubstantial and wholly vacuous.

Here, the term **entities** refers to compounded factors. Because such factors have the nature of momentary destruction, that is of being destroyed every moment, they are **impermanent**. The intrinsic being of **entities** is the absence of substance or essence. Nonetheless, for ordinary people, the actuality of their intrinsic being appears to exist. Therefore, like illusion, **entities** are **deceptive factors**. Such factors cannot endure for long. They are fragile, and therefore, they are said to be **pithless**. As they are without essence, they are called **empty**, and as they are without substance, they are **insubstantial**. Impermanence, therefore, is the very nature of **entities**. Thus, through seeing **entities** in this way, the wise man sees them as **vacuous** (*vivikta)*. The term vacuity or **vacuous** means emptiness or **empty**. Moreover, vacuity implies non-origination and isolation which is its literal meaning. Therefore, when it is said that the *yogin* has seen the vacuity of **entities**, it means that he has seen their Emptiness. But the **vacuous** nature of existence is not seen through abandoning **entities**. Rather Emptiness is seen inasmuch as **entities** are **empty**. Therefore, in order to demonstrate Emptiness, impermanence was specially taught by the Buddha.

Again, **vacuous** means without stain. Ordinary people who are in error mistakenly conceive even **entities** which are pure in

their intrinsic being to be impure through the action of soiling such **entities** by mental fabrication, however, the Holy Personalities do not do so. They see the **vacuous** as merely pure and without stain. Alternatively, one can say that the Holy Personalities who have arisen from the supraknowledge of suchness see **entities** as **vacuous**.

The Master N@g@rjuna who has penetrated the truth and realized suchness has made this realization available to others through the application of logically constructed reasoning.

XXVI. Without an objective position, without a support, without foundation and without abiding, entities only originated from the cause of ignorance are entirely without beginning, middle or end.

XXVII. Without essence, like a banana tree and a fairy city, the unbearable city of delusion that is cyclical existence appears like a magical illusion.

Rely upon this statement as one might rely upon the earth which is the basis of the harvest. This statement is the basis of the harvest of truth. The manifold objects of experience are without any place of **abiding**, so they are said to be without an **objective position**. The perception of factors occurs dependent upon conditions as if propped up by conditions, while in reality, there is no **support**. The term **foundation** refers to the general cause of factors, their origination, extension and growth as in the case of the root of a tree. Because of all this, it is said that the world of **cyclical existence** is not established. Therefore, the world of **cyclical existence** is an error.

If examined more closely, the term **objective position** refers to the six sense spheres. The term **support** refers to all factors of experience without exception. The term **foundation** refers to the seed as well as to the conditions which produce and sustain factors, therefore all factors participate in Interdependent Origination. They do not possess substantial existence, consequently, it is not appropriate to consider the world of **cyclical existence** as existing in truth, because it is devoid of **abiding** and the like.

Now, it may be asked, if indeed there is no **cyclical**

existence, then how is it that its reality appears in various forms? The Holy Personalities do not perceive it in various forms. For them, **cyclical existence** has only a single character, i.e., Emptiness. In Emptiness, there are no various forms. Ordinary people deluded by the sleep of **ignorance** perceive various forms as if in a dream.

XXVIII. Whatsoever appears to the worldly (commencing) from Brahm@ and the like as real is false for the Holy Personalities. Therefore, what remains apart from this?

The world of cyclical existence is not established substantially, but rather by ignorance. It certainly springs up from the cause of the seed of ignorance. Therefore, it is said that beginning, middle and end are to be rejected and that origination, duration and destruction are absent.

As the world of cyclical existence originates from the seed of ignorance, it is likened to a banana tree which is without essence. If it were not originated from the seed of ignorance, then when subjected to examination, an essence would be found. However, when compounded factors are examined, they are found to be like the aggregation of the banana tree, without essence. Whatever has no essence, but contrary to fact appears as if it had an essence, does so by the power of ignorance.

Again, because the world of cyclical existence is like a fairy city, it is said to originate from the seed of ignorance. No matter how beautiful a fairy city may appear, when it is examined, it is not as it appears, therefore, it is not real or genuine. Therefore, when it is examined in this way, the world of cyclical existence which originates from the cause of ignorance is not established actually. Then, the unbearable city of cyclical existence is surely a product of delusion.

Because the world of cyclical existence which appears like an illusion is difficult to reverse although it is the source of many woes and because it is difficult to recognize its true nature inasmuch as it is obscured by ignorance, it is called unbearable or terrible. The world of cyclical existence is unbearable or suffocating, therefore, it

is a cause of fear. But those who are free from error see it to be like illusion. The city of delusion experienced by ordinary people is seen to be mere illusion by the **Holy Personalities**. Moreover, because ignorance is like delusion, therefore, the world of cyclical existence is not substantial.

The penetration of an object which is beyond the objects of the sense organs is understood to be the state of **Brahm@**, and this is valid. However, even what appears to be the real substantial nature of entities is **false** for the **Holy Personalities**. The one truth taught by the Blessed One is Nirv@%a. Compounded factors of experience are **false** and have the nature of being deceptive. Since without doubt, all these appearances are **false**, what endures among all these? Therefore, there exists nothing which is not like illusion.

Otherwise, if **Brahm@** and the rest who are **worldly** and the **Holy Personalities** had the same vision, then, in that case, the **worldly** and the **Holy Personalities** would become equal. However, the worldly and the Holy Personalities are not comparable.

XXIX. The worldly who are infatuated by ignorance follow the current (of their) desire, while the wise are free from desire. How can their virtue be similar?

Their eyes of knowledge are blinded by the cataract of **ignorance**. Therefore, the whole world of sentient beings from Brahm@ downward without exception fail to see the truth. Consequently, they are whirled powerlessly in the great whirlpool of cyclical existence agitated by the wind of error. The vessel of their virtuous actions is shattered. With the vessel of their virtuous actions shattered, the **worldly** carried away by the current of their **desire** reap the consequences of their ripening unwholesome actions.

On the contrary, the **virtue** of the **wise** purified by wisdom who possess the excellent eye of knowledge and are satisfied through drinking from the river of the essence of the nectar of the Holy Dharma is superior. They constantly adhere to the way of virtuous actions and to the way of the Dharma. How can such

virtuous ones be imagined to be equal to the **worldly** mentioned above? It is not correct to suppose that light and darkness, Sa ` s@ra and Nirv@%a are equal. Therefore, without doubt, whatever is real for **worldly**, like Brahm@ and so forth, who follow the way of cyclical existence is false for the Holy Personalities.

Now, if Sa ` s@ra is empty in its intrinsic being, then, how is it that the Blessed Buddha did not demonstrate the real state of things, but taught aggregates, elements and sense spheres which are unreal? Here as a means of entering into the ultimate truth, the aggregates, elements and sense spheres which are unreal are demonstrated in the beginning. In the beginning, the real state of things, suchness or Emptiness is not demonstrated, because if it were demonstrated in the beginning, it would be meaningless. The Dharma which is free from the precipices of the two extremes cannot be shown in the beginning to people whose intellects are not purified. Therefore, the Buddha who was skilled in accomplishing the benefit of sentient beings had recourse to various forms of indirect teaching.

XXX. First, the seeker for reality should be told that everything exists. Later, when he has understood things and is free from desire, he should be told that everything is vacuous.

If people whose minds are not purified are initially introduced to Emptiness, they will be confused. Therefore, the Holy Personalities do not demonstrate Emptiness in the beginning.

Well, what then should the teacher tell those who are looking for the real state of things? At first, he should tell them that **everything exists**. It is stated that the term **everything** is meant to include the five aggregates, the twelve sense spheres and the eighteen elements. Once the disciple has grasped the aggregates, elements and sense spheres, by means of examples like short and long and the light of an oil lamp, he is shown the interdependence of this and that.

The disciple comes to understand things when he realizes that objects which are gained with great effort are destroyed without difficulty. Seeing the easy destruction of all that one has

striven for in the worldly way, one becomes disgusted. He ceases to approve the conduct of ordinary people and ceases to delight in birth. Unhappy and ill at ease with destruction and death, he develops the wish to sever attachment to Sa`s@ra, the wish to abandon Sa`s@ra. He loosens his attachment and clinging to the self. Only then should vacuity be demonstrated to him. If the teacher demonstrates Emptiness in this way, it will not be fruitless. The disciple also will avoid straying into a mistaken way of viewing things.

Otherwise, if the apparent and ultimate truths are mistakenly thought to be incompatible, the teaching of Emptiness will lead to error. If this occurs, one will find it difficult to renounce unwholesome actions. In this case, the unwise thinking that Sa`s@ra is empty, will be loathe to perform wholesome actions which are necessary. Such a person will be like the bird who leaves his nest before his wings are fully developed and is consequently destroyed. That is because such persons have not developed their own intuition of the truth.

XXXI. Those inferior people who do not understand the meaning of vacuity and accept merely the verbal sense do not accomplish merit and are lost.

For one who has within himself directly intuited Emptiness, the non-performance of wholesome and unwholesome actions is correct. However, those who have not directly known Emptiness, but have merely acquired the **verbal sense** of Emptiness, simply imitate the accomplished ones and engage in unwholesome actions, not in wholesome ones. Like the bird whose wings are not completely developed, they will fall into the depth of the afflictions. After all, merely by hearing the word water, one cannot quench ones thirst. Nor can one satisfy ones hunger merely by hearing the word food. Those who only engage in unwholesome actions are called **inferior people**. In order to discourage this kind of conduct, the Buddha taught His audience the apparent truth which is not without meaning.

XXXII. It has been explained that the effects of actions are surely not lost and that there are six realms of sentient

beings. Having thoroughly understood their nature, non-origination has also been demonstrated.

The Blessed One taught the existence of the **six realms** of migration wherein sentient beings perform **actions** and experience their **effects**.

Then for those who are inclined toward the truth, as a corrective for the knot of **actions**, the **non-origination** of cyclical existence consequent upon the realization of its **nature** was also demonstrated. The various realms are interdependently originated, therefore, they are not originated substantially. When their **nature** has been understood, then the path and cyclical existence are unoriginated.

In this way, the path leading to the gaining of supraknowledge is also demonstrated. The description of the realms and the like is therefore undertaken with a purpose in mind. Now, if it be asked, what is the purpose?

XXXIII. Intentionally, the Conquerors explained "I" and "Mine". Similarly, the aggregates, elements and sense spheres were also proclaimed intentionally.

The Blessed Buddha abandoned **I** and **mine**. But for the benefit of certain disciples accustomed to the ways of the world, the Buddha adopted the use of the expressions: **I** and **mine**. Similarly, **intentionally**, the Buddha taught the **aggregates**, **elements** and **sense spheres**, because without recourse to analysis, there is no method by means of which the worldly can enter the real state of things.

As the Buddha taught the **aggregates**, **elements** and **sense spheres** with a purpose in mind and not in realty, then there ought to be substantiation of this claim by means of logic and scripture. First, according to logic, the following stanza may be considered.

XXXIV. The primary elements etc. are included in consciousness. If freedom arises through this understanding, why are they not erroneously imagined?

Consciousness is that by which the perception of origination is apprehended. The **primary elements** etc. are merely fabricated. Without creating a conceptual scheme in

consciousness, in the world nothing can be stipulated to exist, because consequently the baron woman's son etc. would exist. Therefore, the **primary elements** and the secondary elements, the mind and the mental derivatives and the factors disassociated from mind, because they have **consciousness** as their cause, are all included in **consciousness**. When the *yogin* sees the non-existent objects imputed by **consciousness** which are false and deceptive factors as not originated in their intrinsic being, then he knows their nature certainly. Again, knowing that **consciousness** also is not originated substantially, he yet knows that from it are produced the **primary elements** etc. without exception. All the manifold factors of experience are similar to a reflection. When the form is extinguished, so too the reflection is extinguished. Inasmuch as all the manifold factors of experience exist merely in the manner of reflections, are they not **erroneously imagined**? Therefore, the aggregates etc. exist because of **consciousness**. Though they do not exist in reality, they appear to exist, therefore, they are not substantially existent. The aggregates etc. were demonstrated for those who suffer from the pride of clinging to I and mine.[13]

Thus far, it has been demonstrated logically that the aggregates and the rest were taught with a purpose in mind. Now, it will be shown by recourse to scripture that although the aggregates and the rest are false, they were taught with a purpose.

XXXV. The Conquerors proclaimed that Nirv@%a is the only truth, so who among the wise could understand the rest not to be false?

The Blessed Buddha said to the monks that **Nirv@%a**, the non-deceptive substratum is the only supreme **truth**. Who among the **wise** would fail to understand in the light of this reference that the aggregates etc. are **false**? Because if the aggregates, elements and sense spheres are examined by reasoning and scripture, they are found not to be established in their intrinsic being, therefore, the following couplet surely indicates the **truth**.

XXXVI. a. As long as there is movement of the mind, so long one will be in the domain of M@ra.

M@ra obstructs the light of wisdom of the Holy Personalities,

therefore, he is great in the three spheres and owns the ministers that are the four wrong views or dogmas. He is always surrounded by the retinue of the afflictions of attachment and so forth. The ignoble do not disparage him. They follow the way of evil conduct, and therefore **M@ra** is the cause of the diffusion of the sentient beings of the universe of cyclical existence. **M@ra** is called ignorance. Failing to go beyond ignorance, entities are imagined because of erroneous views. On the other hand, if non-origination is understood, because then the **mind** is steady, one is not in the **domain** of **M@ra**.

XXXVI.b. (If it is otherwise), then in that case, how will faultlessness not be justified?

Here, the phrase, **then in that case**, indicates the complete apprehension of the fact of non-origination in reality. Therefore, if one has completely penetrated the reality of non-origination, one does not recognize the substantiality of things. Regarding the substance of appearance, if there is error, it - the substance of appearance - exists. If not, then it does not exist.

XXXVII. The world has ignorance as a condition, because the Buddhas proclaimed it to be so. Therefore, why is it not justified that this world be (the effect of) conceptualization?

The **world** having **ignorance** as its **condition**, consequently originates from **ignorance**. Here, the term **world** refers to the five appropriating aggregates. Conditioned by **ignorance**, volitions arise. Conditioned by volitions, consciousness arises. The Blessed Buddha taught that the **world** has **ignorance** as its **condition**. It is not established in its intrinsic being, that is, it is not established substantially. Any substance established in its own actuality would not have delusion as its **condition**. Therefore, since **ignorance** is a **condition**, why is it not justifiable to regard the **world** as the effect of mere **conceptualization**. When it is asked, why is it not justifiable to regard the **world** as the effect of mere **conceptualization**? - the question is meant to indicate that in fact it is justified to regard it so.

Again, the **world** as the effect of mere **conceptualization**

means that as the **world** is not established substantially, the **world** is constructed by **conceptualization** just as one constructs the idea of a man in the darkness. Therefore, if there exist error, mistaken views and the like, the **world** exists, but if there is no error, the **world** does not exist.

XXXVIII. How will what is extinguished when ignorance is extinguished not be seen to be the construction of ignorance?

When a light is brought into the darkness, the form of a man is no longer perceived. When this is understood, then the erroneous perception was not cognized certainly, since it was constructed or imagined by **ignorance**. The appearance is not established substantially, therefore, the world does not exist substantially, because like a reflection, it depends upon cause and conditions.

XXXIX. Whatsoever originates from a cause does not endure without conditions. It is destroyed through the absence of conditions, therefore, how can it be apprehended to exist?

If the world existed in its intrinsic being, that is if it existed substantially, then it would not be dependent upon **cause** and **conditions**. In that case, it would not be created. Then not even its survival would depend upon **conditions**. Further, if the world were established substantially, it could not change its form. In this way, in order to avoid changing its form, the **conditions** for its persistence should be ascertainable. Anything which like a reflection depends upon **cause** and **conditions** to **exist** is not established in its intrinsic being. Anything which is established substantially cannot change its nature in the absence of the **conditions** needed for its survival. In that case, it cannot be eliminated. Whatever cannot endure and is eliminated in the absence of the **conditions** needed for its continued existence, like a reflection, is not established in its intrinsic being. Whatever is, in this way, not established in its intrinsic being, can also not be established by another. There is no reasonable argument that can support such a notion. The existence of such an entity is illogical. Non-Buddhists who do not accept Interdependent Origination have

attachment to the intrinsic being of entities.

XL. If the exponents of existence remain attached to (their) precious entities and continue in this way, there is nothing amazing in it.

According to the tenets of the *S@ ` khya* system, the qualities: lightness, passion and darkness are permanent. The *Vai^e&ika*, for their part, accept that atoms of earth, water, fire and air which are the foundation of all compounded things without exception are permanent. Consequently, they are termed, Eternalists. If in this way, they grasp at the substantial nature of **entities** and remain attached to them, the intelligent observer will not be even slightly amazed.

Now, if it be asked why? In the world, reliance upon non-existent **entities** is a cause of omniscience. While, reliance upon existent **entities** is not such a cause. Nevertheless, their reliance upon such **entities** stems from the tenets of their systems, therefore, it is not a source of amazement to the wise.

However, the *Vaibh@&ika, Sautr@ntikas* and *Vij~@nav@dins,* in their systems, demonstrate the unreasonable character of existence. If they still adhere to the notion of **entities**, it is indeed a source of amazement to the wise.

XLI. However it is amazing that the exponents of the impermanence of everything who rely upon the Buddha's way continue to cling to such precious entities in disputation.

The Buddhist path is that of Interdependent Origination. Relying upon this vision, all compounded factors, since they participate in Interdependent Origination are impermanent. While they accept this, they nonetheless would like to establish the intrinsic being of **entities**. They dispute with the advocates of Emptiness relying upon impossible non-existent **entities** which is a source of amazement and wonder.

All the above schools although they rely upon the teaching of **impermanence** and accept Interdependent Origination demonstrate the substantial existence of **entities**. It is a source of amazement for the wise.

Just as sometimes inferior persons who are in fact unworthy of salutation are nonetheless offered salutation sarcastically, so it is said that the attitude of these Buddhist schools is a source of amazement and wonder.

XLII. If when analyzed what are called this and that are not to be perceived, (then) what wise man will argue that this and that are real?

Thus, all conditioned factors: form, feeling, consciousness and so forth participate in Interdependent Origination, therefore, they are not originated in their intrinsic being. The characteristic mark of whatever is not originated in its intrinsic being is not perceived, therefore, although it may be said, "this is form", "this is feeling", "this is consciousness", "these are the other conditioned factors", they never appear to the perceiving subject. Whatever is not **perceived** distinctly by the mind cannot be demonstrated to others and cannot be the basis or object of disputation for those who possess wisdom. The term disputation indicates the activity of establishing or proving ones own position and refuting the position of others. In this way, when nothing at all is apprehended or **perceived**, how can one demonstrate an entity which one believes to exist substantially to another, saying "this is form" and the like. Alternatively, how can one demonstrate or declare that an entity which others believe to exist substantially and which one believes to be false is in fact so. In this way, those who have not understood the meaning of Interdependent Origination which is the absence of substantial origination are liable to develop erroneous conceptions.

XLIII. Those who are attached to the self and the world as not dependent, alas, are attracted to the views of permanence, impermanence and the like.

There are those who do not regard the five aggregates as devoid of substance like a reflection and do not hold that relying upon the former, the so called **self** is applied in the manner of a name. On the contrary, they call the establishment of the mind in its own characteristic mark the **self** and are surely caused to stray from the path of Nirv@%a by the great river of **views**.[14]

Now, one might ask, if the mind is indeed established in its

intrinsic being, that is substantially, then is it permanent or impermanent? If it is permanent, then you maintain that it is substantially existent. If it is impermanent, then you are an exponent of Nihilism. If you hold that something which has arisen, after ceases to exist, that is the view of Nihilism. Then, alas, those who think in this way are attracted by **views**.

The term **world** means the five aggregates. If the five aggregates are thought to be established in their own characteristic mark, then too a similar fault will occur.

Otherwise, the *S@`khyas* and others hold that the **self** is independent and permanent. According to them, it is established in its intrinsic being and is not interdependently originated. The **world** too is of the substance of primordial matter, *prak=ti*. They believe that primordial matter is substantially existent and that it does not change. They further hold that the changing conglomerations of objects is opposite to this.

Now, there are some Buddhist schools that accept the five aggregates and the **self** as interdependent, but who also accept them to exist as substances. Again, there are Buddhists who accept that ignorance and volitions function as causes and conditions for the origination of things but who accept the substantial existence of consciousness etc. The latter **views** are also wrong.

XLIV. For whosoever holds that dependent entities are established in reality how will the faults of permanence and the like not also occur?

Therefore, by accepting the substantial existence and non-existence of the self and factors, the **faults** of **permanence** and the like, that is Eternalism and Nihilism occur. When the above erroneous views are removed, one has understood the precise meaning of Interdependent Origination, **reality**.

XLV. Those who hold that dependent entities are like the moon's reflection in water, neither true nor false, are not attracted to a view.

Form and the rest do not exist substantially. Substantial existence cannot change its mode of being. Whatever is substantially non-existent also cannot possibly exist later on. While

one may accept the existence of causes and conditions, nothing at all can possibly originate. Causes and conditions also could hardly exist substantially, for this would be impossible and contrary to their **dependent** or interdependently originated state.

Now suppose that one would like to get well rid of this fault. If one accepts substantial existence, but despite this, accepts the notion of Interdependent Origination, then causes and conditions will not occur. Causes and conditions, in that case, will be without a purpose. In this case also, Interdependent Origination will be contradicted. If it is contrary to Interdependent Origination, then all the stipulated schemes will become as nothing. Cyclical existence also will be unapprehended like the horn of a donkey. In that case, the factors, cyclical existence, birth, family, color, form, knowledge, the sphere of air, gold, silver, lapis lazuli, the red and the white lotuses, trees, mountains, jar and chariot etc. will all be unapprehended and non-existent. But, when all these are perceived, to accept them to be non-existent is not correct.

Thus having rejected the alternatives of substantial existence and non-existence, the appearance of objects is established merely by conditions like the appearance of a **reflection**. Therefore, the fact that they are not established substantially ought to be accepted. In this way, the factors which participate in the domain of erroneous views, like a **reflection**, are interdependently originated and free from the alternatives of Eternalism and Nihilism.

This is not contradictory. Whatever has been said regarding the different aspects of cyclical existence is not impossible. The Holy Personalities have given up erroneous views. As they are free from false superimposition, their liberation is not unreasonable. Because factors are interdependently originated, they are not originated substantially. Therefore, all **entities** are like the **moon's reflection in water**. They are not established in their intrinsic being, like a **reflection**. Such objects are held to be not essentially **true**, and because they are not essentially or intrinsically **true**, so too they are not essentially **false**.

The conceptions of truth and falsity depend upon **entities**. However, factors that participate in Interdependent Origination are

not essentially **entities**, but appear like a **reflection**. Therefore, they are not real. If they were real, then consequently, it would be impossible for them to change their mode of being. In the world, however, things appear to be real or **true**, therefore, they are not also altogether **false**. The statement that **entities** are not **true** is also made with a purpose in mind, the purpose being to benefit certain persons of particular dispositions. Moreover, because things are not **true**, we are not Eternalists or substantialists. However, things are also not **false**, consequently, we are also not Nihilists.

In this way, if one comprehends that things which participate in Interdependent Origination are not substantially existent, then by means of the vessel of the knowledge of Interdependent Origination, one will cross the ocean of the **view** of permanence and impermanence which like great waves are agitated by the wind of error. Thereafter, one will reach the great plain of Nirv@%a which is adorned by the forest of the trees of the matchless teachings of the Buddha having the marvelous jeweled limbs of Enlightenment, stainless, because of the achievement of the ten powers of Buddhahood. When one has happily reached the goal of vacuity through the knowledge of perfection and non-origination, then one can proclaim the message of Interdependent Origination for the benefit of others.

Those who do not understand the reality of Interdependent Origination will conceive of the substantial existence of **entities**.

XLVI. If the acceptance of entities is present, the terrible erroneous views will arise from which attachment and ill will originate. From the latter, disputation will arise.

Here, the term **attachment** refers to **attachment** to ones own position. The term **ill will** refers to the rejection of others' positions, or the turning of ones back upon others. It is called **terrible** because the consequences of this attitude are extremely unpleasant and difficult to bear. Moreover, it is **terrible** because it damages ones mental continuum and is difficult to escape. What is the attitude in question? It is none other than the grasping of **views**. The presence of **views** of this kind too arises from the **acceptance** of **entities**. If there exists grasping of **views**, so then

there occurs the wish to demonstrate the objects which are accepted by oneself and the desire to vindicate the facts that one accepts. Again, there occurs the desire to debunk what is accepted by others. Therefore, the **disputations** which arise from the acceptance of **views** also arise from the basis of the inclination to accept **entities**. Besides, there are other consequences as well.

XLVII. That (the acceptance of entities) is the cause of all views. Without it, the afflictions will not originate, therefore, if this is known, views and afflictions will be thoroughly purified.

If entities are accepted, the alternatives of beginning, middle and end will be conceived. Attachment to entities is the **cause** of all the varieties of discriminating conceptions. Once discriminating conceptions and **views** are present, then the **afflictions** which are born from adherence to **views** will occur. Attachment to ones own view will lead to pride and arrogance. Moreover, ill will toward the **views** of others will occur in its turn. Originated from delusion, **views** produce **afflictions**. Because in this way, all **views** and **afflictions originate** from the **cause** of apprehending or perceiving entities, therefore, if one penetrates the essential nature of entities and ceases to apprehend them, **views** will be abandoned. When **views** are abandoned, **afflictions** also are **purified**.

XLVIII. How will this be known? - By seeing Interdependent Origination. The Knower of Suchness (The Buddha) said that the dependently originated does not originate.

When **Interdependent Origination** is seen, the substantial nature of entities ceases to be perceived, because whatever originates dependent upon something else is essentially not originated like a reflection.

Now, whatever is **originated** is indeed **originated**. How can you claim that it is not? If you say it is not **originated**, then how can you maintain that it is **dependently originated**? If in this way, it is suggested that the latter statement contradicts the former, this objection also can be met.

Alas, those who have neither ears nor hearts seek to find

fault in my explanation when they are themselves out of place. Whatever is **dependently originated**, like a reflection, does not **originate** substantially. Therefore, when I speak as before, how can there be occasion to find fault in this explanation? One who perceives that a form which is **dependently originated**, like a reflection, is false, may say, it is not **originated**. Therefore, it may be said that whatever is not **originated** substantially is not **originated**.

The purpose of this text is to demonstrate the real state of things. However, a traveler who has lost his way, confused by error, may fail to see the way things really are. **Interdependent Origination** which is not substantially **originated** does not occur in the nature of error. Ordinary people imagine substantial origination. They become attached to this imagined substantial origination and consequently become afflicted. In order to free them from this affliction, the Blessed Buddha**-the Knower of Suchness-** who is foremost among the knowers of reality: the disciples, the Private Buddhas and the Bodhisattvas, said that whatever is **dependently originated** does not **originate**.

The magician who creates the form of a lovely young woman will not suffer from the afflicted states of mind that arise from the notion that it is a real young woman. But, another, overcome with arrogance and error, who believes her to be real will be affected by desire and the like. In this way also, the Blessed One has said that **dependently originated** things are not **originated**. The above serves as a corrective for the attachment to the notion that entities exist substantially.

XLIX. The process of clinging and disputation etc. will originate from attachment for those who are dominated by the false cognition that is grasping at the unreal as real.

Therefore, in order to correct the error of assuming entities which are **unreal**, that is not substantially **real** to be **real**, the Buddha has taught Interdependent Origination. The things that participate in Interdependent Origination are deceptive. When one has realized that such entities are not **real**, then **attachment** to them can be removed. When one has removed **attachment** to

entities, one can then remove **grasping** at entities. Here, by **grasping** is meant the appropriation of entities, that is making entities ones own. Once this **attachment**, this appropriating tendency is removed, then **attachment** to desired objects, **attachment** to views and **attachment** to **disputation** can also be eliminated.

L. Those who are of excellent qualities have no position and no disputation. How could those who have no position have another's position?

Now, if it is said by *M@dhyamikas* that although they have no **position** of their own, it is not impossible for them to refute **another's position**, then it is not so, because when the **position** of another exists, ones own **position** cannot consequently be non-existent. When no entity exists, and there exists no **position** of ones own or of another, then the afflictions of those who see this reality will surely be annihilated. How is that so?

LI. Whosoever has apprehended any objective position whatsoever will be caught by the deceiver - the serpent of the afflictions. Those whose minds have not apprehended an objective position will not be caught.

Desire moves in the dense forest of volitions where the beast of erroneous views has made his liar in the sense faculty of vision and obstructs the wholesome life. Those who are attached to an **objective position** cease upon it as a support. On the other hand, those who do not at all perceive an entity who have put an end to the cause of being bitten by the **serpent of the afflictions** have plugged up the apertures of the senses by the applications of the shutters of mindfulness and attention. They do not find themselves caught by the **serpent of the afflictions**. In their **minds**, they do not dwell upon or grasp any **objective position**. Therefore, the **minds** of those who do not perceive any **objective position** do not come to harm, because of the poisonous **deceiver**, the **serpent of the afflictions**. If there existed no perception of entities, then there would be no apprehension on the part of the mind. Therefore, those who have no mental perception of an **objective position** are not caught by the vicious deceitful, **serpent of the afflictions**. Those

who perceive form etc. in their intrinsic being, although they think they can abandon the **afflictions**, cannot in fact do so.

LII. a. Why will those whose minds have (apprehended) an objective position not be caught by the great poison of the afflictions, ...

If entities are perceived, the presence of the **afflictions** like attachment and the rest without doubt, cannot be removed. If those entities remain agreeable to the mind, it will be difficult to remove attachment to them. On the other hand, if they are found not to be agreeable, then it will be difficult to remove the consequent attitude of aversion toward them. Otherwise, if one should be able to remove both these attitudes of mind, that is attachment and ill will, and yet continue to superimpose the perception of substantial existence upon an **objective position**, then an **objective position** of **indifference** will be perceived. Then, it will be difficult to remove the subtle affliction of ignorance with regard to such an **objective position** of **indifference**. When an **objective position** of **indifference** exists, the subtle affliction of ignorance which is a cause of suffering and which is conducive to the arising of the suffering of Sa ` s@ra will be present. Harmful by nature, this subtle ignorance gives rise to the other **afflictions**.

LII. b. ...when even those who dwell in indifference will be caught by the serpent of the afflictions.

When delusion is rampant, its darkness obscures the vision of the real so that ordinary people by the power of delusion are inclined to establish the substantial existence of entities.

LIII. As children are attached to a reflection, perceiving it to be true, so the worldly are trapped in the prison of objects.

Just as **children** who are not conversant with the conventions of the world and innocent about the nature of consciousness, when perceiving a **reflection**, believe that they are apprehending **objects** that exists substantially and become attached to them and pursue them, similarly, the **worldly** who are ignorant are attached to the belief that entities which are born from the power of delusion are **true** or real. They also commit their whole

being to the pursuit of such entities. Attracted by the imagined existence of entities and subject to the power of attachment, ill will, pride and so forth, they pursue them without freedom to do otherwise like **children**. Undertaking this or that activity in pursuit of their **objects**, they become **trapped in the prison of objects**, that is Sa`s@ra. Such people who do not know the **true** state of Sa`s@ra are objects of compassion for the Holy Personalities. The Holy Personalities who possess the clear eye of wisdom know precisely the nature of reality.

LIV. The Great Persons who see entities through the eye of knowledge to be like a reflection are not entangled in the mire of objects.

The **Great Persons** who are free from attachment to **entities** are not **entangled in the mire of objects**. The **Great Persons** or Holy Personalities are familiar with the nature of a **reflection** unlike the childish who are not.

LV. Ordinary people desire form; middling ones are free from desire (for form); those with the excellent intelligence of knowing the nature of form are entirely freed.

Ordinary people who are childish by nature are called childish. Although the body, **form**, be impure and subject to momentary destruction, some think it is pure and permanent. Moreover, the body is hardly praise worthy, requires constant care and is the basis of the experience of suffering. Again, for the sake of the body, people undertake unwholesome actions which have suffering as their consequence. These are the consequences of the desire of the childish for **form**, that is the body, notwithstanding its lack of purity and so forth.

Middling ones, seeing the impure state of the body, declare it to be just so. They have seen the accumulation of many hundreds of sufferings associated with the physical body. The middling person, having freed himself from **desire** for **form**, achieves the formless absorptions. The **middling ones** are so called, because they have transcended the sphere of **desire**.

Those who understand **form** to be without substantial

existence, like a reflection, are **freed**, because they are aware of the various mental fabrications associated with **form** and the like.

LVI. Desire arises from the thought of the pleasurable; from its opposite, desire is left behind. Seeing entities as vacuous like a magical man, Nirv@%a is achieved.

Those who possess excellent intelligence and see the world of cyclical existence as **vacuous** and empty like a **magical man**, gain **Nirv@%a**. They are to be known as the Disciples, Private Buddhas and Blessed Buddhas. Middling ones are of the world although they are free from sensual **desire**. The childish, on the other hand, are attached to objects of sensual **desire**.

Now, it may be asked, if one sees the world of cyclical existence as **vacuous** like a **magical man**, then what will **Nirv@%a** be like?

LVII. Those who are affected by erroneous cognition acquire whatsoever faults of the afflictions (exist). Those who know the meaning of the conceptions of entities and non-entities will not (acquire them).

Those who perceive cyclical existence to be like illusion, who do not perceive the actual marks of **entities** and **non-entities** and who thoroughly understand the **conceptions** of **entities** and **non-entities** do not imagine or fabricate these **conceptions**. Those who have analyzed the **conceptions** of existence and non-existence and of **entities** and **non-entities** and who have understood them certainly do not fall into cyclical existence because of the **afflictions** of attachment and so forth. The **afflictions** arise for those who suffer from **erroneous cognition**.

Those who because of this **erroneous cognition**, perceive objects are therefore affected by the **afflictions**. Those who have succeeded in penetrating the real state of things are free from the **afflictions** and will certainly achieve Nirv@%a. The childish, on the other hand, are affected by erroneous views and mistaken beliefs, therefore, it is not sustainable to maintain that they have achieved Nirv@%a.

When an objective position is perceived, the **conceptions** of attachment and freedom from attachment arise, in so far as one is

attached to an objective position, or alternatively, free from attachment to an objective position.

LVIII. If an objective position existed, attachment and freedom from attachment might arise. But the Great Persons who are without an objective position have neither attachment nor freedom from attachment.

If **attachment** and **freedom from attachment** are perceived, then **attachment** and **freedom from attachment** will be appropriated. The **Great Persons** or Holy Personalities do not perceive the substantial existence of entities, therefore, they have no **objective position** or fixed object of the mind. They will surely gain Nirv@%a.

LIX. Those who think of complete vacuity are not moved even by the fickle mind. They will cross the terrible ocean of existence churned by the serpent of the afflictions.

Because it is restless by nature, the **mind** is said to be **fickle** like a monkey. Here, **complete vacuity** equals Emptiness. Those who remain steadfast in the cultivation of Emptiness cross the **ocean of existence**.

Now, in order to dedicate the merit of this practise, the final stanza is composed.

LX. By this merit, may all sentient beings, having accumulated the heaps of merit and knowledge, attain the two highest goods (the two dimensions of Buddhahood) that arise from merit and knowledge.

The infinite **merit** that is accomplished in order to bring about the enhanced understanding of all the spheres of **sentient beings** is demonstrated to be the accumulation of the heap of **merit**. This is apart from wisdom and the cause of wisdom. Wisdom and the cause of wisdom which bring about the accomplishment of Buddhahood are referred to in the dedication as the accumulation of **knowledge**.

May all **sentient beings** achieve the excellent fruits or the **two highest goods** that arise from **merit** and **knowledge**. What are the two excellent fruits that are born from the accumulations of **merit** and **knowledge**? The **two highest goods** are the

phenomenal dimension (*Rupak@ya)* and transcendental dimension, (*Dharmak@ya*) of Buddhahood respectively.

The commentary composed by Candrak$rti, the Mah@y@na Master and expositor of the *Madhyamaka* philosophy was translated from Sanskrit into Tibetan by the Indian abbots: Jinamitra, D@na^$la, /$lendrabodhi and by the great Tibetan translator Bande Ye shes sde.

Part Four

Emptiness: The Seventy Stanzas

Section One

An Introduction to Nagarjuna's Emptiness: The Seventy Stanzas

Emptiness: The Seventy Stanzas is markedly different in style from *Reasoning: The Sixty Stanzas*. It also treats a subject matter, admittedly, more rarefied in the philosophical sense, and so N@g@rjuna has not unwisely chosen to adopt a more rigorous and intellectual style. *Emptiness: The Seventy Stanzas* is a text written for philosophers, or at least bright students of philosophy, while as we suggested *Reasoning: The Sixty Stanzas* has an altogether different tenor.

In keeping with the style and object of the text, N@g@rjuna has packed an immense amount of content into a very few words. He would certainly be said to have done justice to that old Sanskrit saying about writers of philosophical texts rejoicing more at the saving of one word in a stanza than most men do at the birth of a son. Fortunately, out of great compassion no doubt, N@g@rjuna has relented and provided an auto-commentary to go along with the text. It has to be said of course that the commentary is also quite terse, but it is loquacious compared to the stanzas.

In fact what the commentary does do at many places is make the words appearing in the stanzas, often in contexts where a single word may have to carry a whole doctrinal position intelligible. Without such a key provided by the commentary, we think the text would be impenetrable in the absence of an authentic oral tradition.

As we have just suggested, the stanzas in the text are so packed with references - often to the views of other Buddhist schools - and so full of meaning, that an entire philosophical disputation between, for instance, a Buddhist Realist opponent and the

Madhyamaka will be expressed in a single stanza. Often too, both the antithesis, or pre- critical position (*p#rvapak&a*) as well as the *Madhyamaka's* critique will amazingly be stuffed into a single stanza, and that also when the aspects of the positions are manifold.

Perhaps *Emptiness: The Seventy Stanzas* is so packed with meaning, because the purpose it seems to have been written to serve is such a great one. Candrak$rti tells us in his introductory remarks in the commentary to *Reasoning: The Sixty Stanzas* that *Emptiness: The Seventy Stanzas* was written to explain Stanza 34 of chapter VII of *The Foundation Stanzas of the Middle Way*. "Like an illusion, a dream and a fairy city are described the concepts of origination, duration and destruction." The stanza Candrak$rti indicates expresses an analogy, but with few exceptions, the text here is full of arguments and far less generous with similes. The arguments are in most cases, because of the excess of contents also more like what we have called proto syllogisms. Perhaps one might say seed syllogisms, expressions in which single words convey condition and consequence and the student of philosophy is left to figure them out for himself. If this is an obstacle to the reading of the text however, it should not be. For one thing, it is much easier to read than the entire *Foundation Stanzas of the Middle Way* a completely satisfactory English translation of which still does not exist to our knowledge, notwithstanding the valiant efforts of a number of excellent scholars. It is hardly surprising, given that the text runs to twenty-seven chapters and hundreds of stanzas, all of them difficult. But here, we would return to our theme. *Emptiness: The Seventy Stanzas* is a summery or condensation of *The Foundation Stanzas of the Middle Way* a philosophical readers' digest of the immense text. Consequently, it should be well suited to our modern age.

Let us pursue this theme a bit further. *The Foundation Stanzas of the Middle Way* contain a very large and important chapter VII on the examination of origination. It actually looks at the three characteristics of the so called compounded factors and discusses, as in the first and twentieth chapters, causation or conditionality. The chapter on origination is very detailed, and we have not read an intelligible English translation. Candrak$rti's

commentary if translated would help, but it has not been. *The Foundation Stanzas of the Middle Way* are, it is acknowledged, cryptic in the extreme. Not so cryptic as those of *Emptiness: The Seventy Stanzas*, but nonetheless often requiring a commentary. In *Emptiness: The Seventy Stanzas*, N@g@rjuna takes up the topic of origination, conditions and compounded factors in a very few stanzas and manages to tap the essentials of the whole *Madhyamaka* critique of these conceptions. In particular, he achieves what we can only call an intellectual miracle when he summarizes in its essentials the whole of chapter VII of *The Foundation Stanzas of the Middle Way* in a single stanza.[1] If we add to it stanzas like XXXI, III, IV and VI we have a very complete discussion of causality in a hand full of stanzas. There are many other examples of N@g@rjuna's wizardry in this text.

Another example of the uncanny ability of *The Seventy Stanzas* to condense arguments treated at much greater length elsewhere is that of the treatment of the question of the self. Like so many other topics dealt with in the text, the question of the self occupies an entire chapter in *The Foundation Stanzas of the Middle Way*,[2] but in *The Seventy Stanzas*, it is dispensed with in one stanza and with hardly any loss of the essential content of the issue. The important alternatives are addressed and rejected and their conventional and fundamentally artificial nature revealed. The quiescent and inexpressible nature of all factors from the standpoint of the real is also indicated.

At other places we find an entire chapter from *The Foundation Stanzas of the Middle Way* replaced by a single stanza in *The Seventy Stanzas*. Take for example the topic of time treated in the XIXth chapter of *The Foundation Stanzas of the Middle Way*. Stanza XXIX of the text reproduces the discussion along with the various critiques advanced by the *Madhyamaka*. Taken together with the auto- commentary which even in this case is not lengthy, the treatment still makes a quite adequate statement of the essential elements of the argument about time. Then there is the case of the stanza which treats the subject of the characteristic and the substratum of the characteristic or whatever one wants to call it.

The point is an important one, because Realists have always linked the existence of a characteristic, let us say solidity with the existence of a substratum or basis in reality, in this case earth or materiality. If the characteristic and substratum scheme are some how fatally flawed, then the assertion of the existence of a real world proved by particular characteristics to exist is toppled. *The Foundation stanzas of the Middle Way* contain a chapter on the question,[3] but in *Emptiness: The Seventy Stanzas*, once again it is summarized in a single stanza. Of course, the subject being an important one, it crops up again in other contexts such as in the discussion of the status of form or matter, just as the discussion of causality also because of its importance is hardly ever very far from the mind of the author. The fact is however that no matter how one quantifies the meaning per word value of *Emptiness: The Seventy Stanzas*, it must rate right at the top.

Not only are important subjects of discussion between Buddhist Realists and the *M@dhyamikas* dealt with here as they have been treated in *The Foundation Stanzas of the Middle Way* only more concisely, but even important principles of the *Madhyamaka* philosophy of argument are enunciated. The Xth chapter of *The Foundation Stanzas of the Middle Way* contains in the main a discussion of the *relata-relatum* phenomenon, but it also presents a clear instance of the enunciation of a system of variables in the forensic methodology of N@g@rjuna. *Emptiness: The Seventy Stanzas* also contains a clear suggestion of such a system. That is to say, differing or variable elements of doctrinal or conceptual schemes can be slotted into a critical framework which consistently exposes them to be empty and relative. It is a lovely demonstration of the critical dialectician's skill.

The text indeed presents the fundamental *Madhyamaka* attitude on the really important questions which divided the Buddhist Realists from the emerging Perfection of Wisdom and *Madhyamaka* traditions. Naturally, we would not want to overplay the relationship between the Perfection of Wisdom literature and the *Madhyamaka* as a systematic school of philosophy. A relationship undoubtedly exists, but it would be a mistake to

assume total consonance between the two movements. In any case, in this and other works, N@g@rjuna is concerned with persuading Buddhist Realists to accept the philosophy of Emptiness, and they did not even accept the Mah@y@na Perfection of Wisdom discourses as valid. N@g@rjuna did not therefore attempt to convince his opponents of the veracity of texts which they refused to acknowledge. On the contrary, he set out in true *Madhyamaka* fashion to convince them of the truth of Emptiness using the very doctrines and logical tools which the Buddhist Realists had come to accept.

As in *The Refutation of Objections,* N@g@rjuna emphasizes in *Emptiness: The Seventy Stanzas* the equivalence of conditionality, absence of intrinsic being and Emptiness. Therefore, although the text occupies itself primarily with Emptiness, causality is still the pedestal of the pillar.

In tandem with the extensive discussion of causality in the context of origination, cause and the like is an illuminating discourse on the subject of actions (*Karma*). The subject of actions is of course very close to that of causality as it deals with the working of cause and effect in the context of intentional actions performed by an agent, call him a moral agent if one will. Again, the subject is treated in *The Foundation Stanzas of the Middle Way* and there it occupies a chapter.[4] In *The Seventy Stanzas* also it is given rather a lot of attention taking up, as it does, eleven stanzas.[5] The discussion follows that found in *The Foundation Stanzas of the Middle Way* very closely. Here also the gripping analogy of the illusory emanation of the Tath@gata is found, and the creative role of imagination or mental fabrication is expounded. The picture which emerges from three striking stanzas which appear uninterrupted by any auto- commentary[6] is one of a phenomenal world animated by imagination, the creative power of consciousness, through a series of projections or emanations. It is a fascinating vision and one that comes pretty near the conception of the Mind Only school, or to look further a field, some of the Cabalistic developments in esoteric Judaism. Of course N@g@rjuna does tell us very emphatically elsewhere in the text that consciousness like

everything else is empty.

The last stanza in N@g@rjuna's treatment of actions is a marvelous recapitulation of the Middle Way. Actions are neither existent nor non-existent, because in either case there are unacceptable consequences for all concerned. The arguments sandwiched into the stanza are examples of arguments *ad absurdum* (*prasa<gav@kya*) But the real achievement of the stanza is the vindication of the utility of actions as long as they are consigned to the sphere of the relative. Actions, if either reified or nullified absolutely fail to function in any way.

Again the text contains a discussion of Nirv@%a, and once again as in *Reasoning: The Sixty Stanzas*, an objectified Nirv@%a is rejected, although perhaps not as fiercely as in the latter. The Realist opponent who sees in Emptiness a threat to his Sa`s@ra-Nirv@%a scheme is shown that Nirv@%a can be nothing other than unoriginated, unceasing Emptiness. This almost echoes the words of the famous utterance of the Buddha, "If there were not an unborn..." Actually, the discussion of the three accepted characteristics of compounded factors, origination etc. which provides the occasion for much of the discussion of causality also supplies the key to the annihilation of the distinction between Sa`s@ra and Nirv@%a. Inasmuch as the characteristics of the compounded factors of the world of experience are not plausible, so their opposites the uncompounded factors, chiefly Nirv@%a are also impossible. In a flash, N@g@rjuna has given the reader the dissolution of the basis of the distinction between Sa`s@ra and Nirv@%a. The distinction rejected in the often quoted two stanzas from *The Foundation Stanzas of the Middle Way*.[7]

There are many other common themes taken up in *Emptiness: The Seventy Stanzas.* One more is the problem of the twelve constituents of Interdependent Origination. As in *Reasoning: The Sixty Stanzas* the principle conclusion of the discourse is that Interdependent origination does not originate. However, in *Emptiness: The Seventy Stanzas* N@g@rjuna directs his arguments perhaps more pointedly at the theory of origination from another espoused by the Buddhist Realists. Intrinsic being or self existence

(*svabh@va*) is of course rejected by the *M@dhyamikas* as in a sense it was even by the Buddhist Realists. The Buddhist Realists claimed a kind of intrinsic being of entities in so far as water is wet while fire is hot etc. However, the Buddhist Realists had to accept the principle of Interdependent Origination, that is "dependent upon this, that arises." The production of things from cause and conditions is such a central item in Buddhist teaching that it could not be ignored even by the most determinedly naive Realist. Therefore, it is precisely this accepted truth of conditionality that N@g@rjuna exploits to convince the Buddhist Realists that conditionality is incompatible with intrinsic being. But then what about extrinsic being, that is being dependent upon another (*parabh@va*) This rather tenuous conception is also attacked in *The Foundation Stanzas of the Middle Way* and here in *Emptiness: The Seventy Stanzas*, N@g@rjuna makes it crystal dear that anything which lacks intrinsic being must also necessarily lack extrinsic being too inasmuch as it is actually non-existent. Besides, anything which lacks intrinsic being is incapable of producing another, because of its very non-existence. Therefore, the twelve constituents are mutually dependent, like the emotions experienced in a dream and the dream itself. The nebulous other being secured by the conventionally accepted conception of origination dependent upon another is therefore refuted.

N@g@rjuna takes up the question of the four erroneous views which receives his attention also in the last chapter of *The Foundation Stanzas of the Middle Way*. We have seen that N@g@rjuna rejects the three characteristics of compounded factors: origination and the like, but there the objects of refutation are philosophical, almost metaphysical. In the context of the discussion of the four erroneous views, the objects at stake are much closer to the religious heart of the common Buddhist practitioner. After all, the three or four characteristics taught by the Buddha with the stated purpose of freeing people from bondage were: impermanence, suffering, not-self and impurity. The opposite of this truths, for the uninstructed are the four erroneous views, that is: permanence, happiness, self and purity. The four characteristics of the world,

impermanence and the like were obviously great favorites with the Buddhist Realists. The Therav@da of Sri Lanka still makes a great deal of them, although in China, they were transmuted almost to the point of obscurity. Notwithstanding this development in the far east, the fact remains that the four characteristics, particularly, we would suggest, impermanence and not-self remain mainstays of basic Buddhist training. Moreover, a case can be and is made by the Indo-Tibetan Mah@y@na tradition in favour of the importance of impermanence and not-self as keys to the vision of Emptiness. N@g@rjuna however, immediately struck by the blatantly dialectical nature of the four erroneous views and their opposites, the four characteristics, did not hesitate to reject them as relative and empty. Again in this there is evidence of N@g@rjuna and the *M@dhyamikas* willingness to dispense even with cherished religious truths. The case of the *Madhyamaka* treatment of Nirv@%a has already been discussed, and even the four noble truths are relegated to the status of convenient expedient for instructing the unenlightened.

The text also contains a lengthy and detailed examination of the aggregates of form and the like as well as the sense spheres, (*@yatana*) which parallels the treatment of the subject in two chapters of *The Foundation Stanzas of the Middle Way*.[8] In fact, a stanza from the *magnum opus* is quoted verbatim in the latter stages of *Emptiness: The Seventy Stanzas*.[9] Again the discussion touches upon the alternatives of intrinsic and extrinsic being alluded to before. Although the stanzas and auto-commentary which treat these issues are rather technical, they yield some very valuable insights into the radical and rigorous nature of the *Madhyamaka* deconstruction of the accepted patterns of perception.

N@g@rjuna proceeds to discuss at some length another one of the five aggregates of particular significance. It is consciousness. The *Madhyamaka* standpoint as one might expect regards consciousness as empty inasmuch as it is conditioned or dependently originated. Nonetheless, N@g@rjuna's treatment of the topic is precocious because it anticipates in its essentials much of the *Madhyamaka* polemic against the later and more doctrinaire

school of the Mind Only tradition. Is it that there was already a germinal school or at least a subterranean current of opinion affirming the real existence of consciousness? Or, did N@g@rjuna simply anticipate the role that an aggregate as central as consciousness would come to play in Buddhist philosophy? After all, even the Buddha had implicitly recognized the fact that consciousness might well be mistaken for the self.

The consideration of consciousness naturally leads N@g@rjuna to take up also the topic of primary mental functions, in this case imagination (*vikalpa*). We persist in translating the original term by imagination in the English, although some of our academic colleges seem to prefer conceptualization or any one of a variety of alternatives. Conceptualization appears to us to be too cerebral. The Tibetan rendering of *vikalpa* covers everything from rank superstition, to deeply ingrained habits of experience like the subject-object polarity, to metaphysical theories. Once again, N@g@rjuna's discussion of imagination is illuminating particularly in view of the place which imagination occupies in, for instance, the works of Asa<ga and Vasubandhu. Imagination obviously receives the same devastating critique as do the other propositions reviewed in the text.

The concluding portions of *Emptiness: The Seventy Stanzas* are largely concerned with a summing up of the basic principles established throughout the body of the work. The importance of the device of the two truths is again reiterated. The order of the world as it is expressed in conventional usage, or the apparent truth is Interdependent Origination. The ultimate reality, is Emptiness. The two are not contradictory but compliment each other functioning together to supply a critical mechanism for achieving liberation.

The text of *Emptiness: The Seventy Stanzas* was translated by me and my associates many years ago at a time when I was inclined to adopt a rather strict and literal approach to the task of translation from the Tibetan. We have, for the purposes of this book, somewhat modified the more extreme peculiarities of style which had appeared in the English translation, but, by and large, we have not attempted a whole scale retranslation of the work. The stanzas

as well as the commentary therefore remain quite faithful to the original text, and this may sometimes create a slightly awkward affect for the reader. We encourage him to persevere however, because while the text, is packed with extremely dense discussion of important themes in a cryptic style, still, if one enters into the spirit of N@g@rjuna's project, one can find *Emptiness: The Seventy Stanzas* very rewarding indeed. In fact, even the dry dialectics of the text possess an irresistible appeal to anyone gifted with a philosophical sense of humor. We must admit that even after many years of working on the text, there are still passages where N@g@rjuna's relentless and inexorable demolition of opinions and views causes us to laugh out loud.

One last word about the perennial problem of distinguishing the pre-critical from the post-critical phases of polemical works like *Emptiness: The Seventy Stanzas.* To put it more simply, it is important that one know who is saying what as the views of the M@dhyamika's opponents receive almost as much space as those of the M@dhyamika himself. We have avoided the practice of overtly marking the opinions of the opponent with some such word as **objection** and the M@dhyamika's retort by **reply** or one of its alternatives. The auto-commentary uses a stock formula to indicate each of these. It uses: "Here it is said", "Here it is asked" or "Here it may be thought" to introduce objections or opinions held by the *Madhyamaka's* opponents. On the other hand, the auto-commentary invariably uses, "Here it is explained" to introduce the M@dhyamika version of things. If the reader bears this in mind and has an eye for the natural and logical drift of the discussion, he should not have any major problems in knowing where the argument stands at any given point.

Section Two

Emptiness: The Seventy Stanzas

I. Duration, origination, destruction, existence, non-existence, inferiority, mediocrity and superiority were taught by the Buddha in accord with conventional usage, not by the power of the real.

II. There is not anything which corresponds to the expressions: not-self, not not-self, both self and not-self (because) all factors which can be spoken of are - like Nirv@%a - in their intrinsic being empty.

III. Since the intrinsic being of all entities does not exist in the cause and conditions, either together or separately, or in any way, therefore they are empty.

IV. The existent does not originate, because it is existent. The non-existent does not (originate) because it is non-existent. The existent and non-existent also does not (originate) because they are heterogeneous. Because there is no origination there is no duration and no destruction.

V. The originated is not the object to be originated. The unoriginated is also not the object to be originated. The (object) at the time of origination is also not the object to be originated, because it would be originated and unoriginated.

VI. If the effect is existent, the cause will possess the effect. If non-existent, the cause will be equal to a non-cause. If neither existent nor non-existent, it is contradictory, nor

again is a cause justified in the three times.

VII. Without one, many does not occur. Without many, one does not occur. Therefore, interdependently originated entities are without signs.

VIII. The twelve constituents of Interdependent Origination which possess the effect of suffering do not originate, as they are neither justified in one moment of consciousness, nor in a series of moments of consciousness.

IX. Impermanence is the negation of permanence. Not-self is the negation of self. Impurity is the negation of purity, and suffering is the negation of happiness. Therefore, there are no erroneous views.

X. Without them, there is no ignorance originated from the four erroneous views. Without it, volitions do not originate nor in the same way do the remaining (constituents).

XI. Without volitions, ignorance does not originate. Without it (ignorance) volitions do not originate. Since they are mutually caused, they are not established in their intrinsic being.

XII. How can what is itself not established in its intrinsic being produce another? Thus another condition which is not established is not what causes the origination of another.

XIII. The father is not the son, nor is the son the father, nor do they exist without mutual dependence, nor are they identical and so also the twelve constituents.

XIV. Neither the happiness and suffering which depend upon an object in a dream, nor that object are existent.

Similarly, neither that which originates dependently, nor that upon which it depends are existent.

XV. If entities are not existent in their intrinsic being, neither inferiority, mediocrity nor superiority, nor the manifold (objects of experience) are established, nor will there be anything established from a cause.

XVI. If intrinsic being were established, a dependent entity would not occur. But without dependence, how does (an entity) exist? Without intrinsic being (an entity) does not occur and with intrinsic being (an entity) cannot be destroyed.

XVII. In what is non-existent, how are intrinsic being, extrinsic being and being possible? Therefore, intrinsic being, extrinsic being and non-being are erroneous.

XVIII. If entities are empty, they can neither cease nor originate. How can what is empty in its intrinsic being either cease or originate?

XIX. Being and non- being are not identical. Without non-being, there is no being. Being and non-being will always occur. Without being, non-being does not arise.

XX. Without being, there is no non-being. Being is not (originated) from itself and not (originated) from another. Thus, there is no being, and without it, there is no non-being.

XXI. If being were just existent, it would be permanent. If it were non-existent, it would surely be annihilated. If being were existent, it would be (both) these two. Therefore, being is not accepted.

XXII. Because of continuity, those (consequences) do not

exist. An entity ceases (to exist) when it has imparted a cause (to an effect). Just as before, this is not established. Further, the fault of interrupting the continuity will occur.

XXIII. Through seeing origination and destruction, the path to Nirv@%a was demonstrated, not by means of Emptiness. These are seen, because (they are) mutually contradictory and so are conceived as such.

XXIV. If neither origination nor cessation are existent, the cessation of what is Nirv@%a? Is not what is in its intrinsic being neither originated nor ceases liberation?

XXV. If Nirv@%a were cessation, it would be annihilation. If it were supposed to be otherwise, it would be permanence. Therefore (Nirv@%a) is neither being nor non-being. It is such as is neither originated nor again ceases.

XXVI. If any cessation were existent, it would occur even without being. Without being, it (cessation) is also non-existent. Again, without non-being, it is non-existent.

XXVII. The characteristic is established by the substratum of the characteristic. The substratum of the characteristic is established by the characteristic, but they are not established independently, nor are they established by one another. What is not established is not that which establishes another which is not established.

XXVIII. By this (analysis), cause and effect, experience and the subject of experience etc., as well as the subject and object of vision etc., what so ever (may exist) are all explained without exception.

XXIX. The three times are non-existent and are mere imagination, because (they) are non-enduring, are

reciprocally established, disordered, not established independently and (because) an entity is non-existent.

XXX. Because the three characteristics of the compounded (factors) - origination, duration and destruction- are non-existent, therefore the compounded (factors) and the uncompounded (factors) are not at all existent.

XXXI. The undestroyed is not destroyed, nor is the destroyed. The enduring does not endure, nor does the unenduring endure. The originated does not originate, nor does the unoriginated (originate).

XXXII. The compounded (factors) and the uncompounded (factors) are neither manifold nor unitary, neither existent nor non-existent, nor both existent and non-existent. Within this perimeter, all possibilities are included.

XXXIII. The Blessed One proclaimed the enduring of actions. The Preceptor proclaimed actions and their effects (and) that the sentient being is the agent of actions and that actions are not lost.

XXXIV. Because it has been demonstrated that they are without intrinsic being, actions do not originate, so they cannot be destroyed. Actions originate from self clinging. That clinging which produces actions also originates from imagination.

XXXV. If actions existed in their intrinsic being, then the body originated from them would be permanent. They would not be endowed with the maturing effect of suffering. Therefore, actions would also be substantial.

XXXVI. Actions originated from conditions are not in the least existent, nor are (actions) existent originated without

conditions. Compounded (factors) are like an illusion, a fairy city and a mirage.

XXXVII. Afflictions are the cause of actions. Volitions consist of actions and afflictions. Actions are the cause of the body, (therefore) all three are also empty in their intrinsic being.

XXXVIII. Without actions, there is no agent. Without those two, there is no effect. Without it, there is consequently no subject of experience. Hence (they) are empty.

XXXIX. If one knows very well actions to be empty, actions will not originate, because of that perception of the real. Without actions, that which originates from actions will not originate.

XL. As the Blessed One, the Tath@gata creates an illusory creation by means of illusory emanation, that illusory creation creates another illusory creation.

XLI. Among them, the illusory creation of the Tath@gata is empty. What need is there to say anything about the illusory creation of an illusory creation? They are both existent in so far as anything which is mere imagination.

XLII. Similarly, the agent is like the illusory creation (and) actions are like the illusory creation of an illusory creation. They are empty in their intrinsic being (and) exist insofar as anything which is mere imagination.

XLIII. If actions existed in their intrinsic being, there would be no Nirv@%a (and no) agent of actions. If (they were) non-existent, there would be no attractive and unattractive effects originated from actions.

XLIV. There exists the statement of existence and also the statement of non-existence and again the statement of both existence and non-existence. The intentional proclamations of the Buddhas are not easily penetrated.

XLV. If form were originated from the great elements, form would originate from a deficient (cause). It is not (originated) from its (own) intrinsic being. (Moreover), since it is non-existent, it is not (originated) from another.

XLVI. In one also, four are not existent. In four also, one is not existent. How would form be established dependent upon the four non-existent great elements?

XLVII. Because, it is never apprehended. (But) if it is said, from the evidence (form is established). That evidence is non-existent, because originated from cause and conditions. If it (form) is still existent, the non-existence of the evidence is not logical.

XLVIII. If (awareness) apprehended form, it would be apprehended as the very intrinsic being (of awareness). How could non-existent awareness originated from conditions apprehend non-existent form?

XLIX. When the originated momentary awareness does not apprehend the originated momentary form, how could it comprehend past and future form?

L. While colour and shape never exist separately, the separate are not apprehended as one, because the two are known as form.

LI. Eye awareness is not existent in the eye. It is not existent in form, nor (in the space) in between. What is constructed dependent upon the eye and form is erroneous.

LII. If the eye does not see itself, how can it see form? Therefore, the eye and form are insubstantial. The remaining sense spheres are also similar.

LIII. The eye is empty of its own substantiality. It is empty of another's substantiality. Form is also similarly empty (and) the remaining sense spheres are also similar.

LIV. When one (sense sphere) is conjoined through contact, then the others are empty. The empty also does not depend upon the non-empty. The non-empty too (does not depend) upon the empty.

LV. The three (which are) non-existent and unenduring in their intrinsic being do not (participate) in conjunction. Because there is no contact of that nature, therefore, feeling is not existent.

LVI. Dependent upon the inner and outer sense spheres, consciousness originates. Thus there is no consciousness. (It) is empty like a mirage and an illusion.

LVII. Consciousness originates dependent upon an object of consciousness, therefore it is non-existent. Without cognition and an object of consciousness, there is consequently no subject of consciousness at all.

LVIII. All is impermanent (but) impermanence or permanence never existed. (If) an entity existed, it would be impermanent or permanent (but) how is it so existent?

LIX. Born from the conditions - attraction, repulsion and error - attachment, aversion and delusion originate. Therefore, attachment, aversion and delusion are non-existent in their intrinsic being.

LX. Because regarding it (a single given object) attachment, aversion and delusion (occur), therefore, they (attachment, aversion and delusion) are produced from imagination. Imagination also is perfectly non-existent.

LXI. The object of imagination is not existent. Without the object of imagination, how is imagination existent? Therefore, since (they are) originated from conditions, the object of imagination and imagination are empty.

LXII. Because of the perception of the real, there is no ignorance originated from the four erroneous views. Since that (ignorance) is non-existent, volitions do not originate. The remaining (constituents) are also similar.

LXIII. What originates dependent upon that, originates from that. Without that, (it) does not originate. Entities and non-entities (as well as) compounded factors and uncompounded factors are peace and Nirv@%a.

LXIV. Entities originated from cause and conditions are imputed to be real. That is proclaimed to be ignorance by the Preceptor. From it, the twelve constituents originate.

LXV. Because of the perception of the real, of entities as empty, ignorance does not originate. Just that is the cessation of ignorance, therefore, the twelve constituents cease.

LXVI. Compounded factors are like a fairy city, an illusion, a mirage, a bubble of water, foam and like a dream and the circle of the whirling fire-brand.

LXVII. No entity whatsoever is existent in its intrinsic being. In this case, a non-entity also is non-existent. Entities and non-entities originated from cause and conditions are

empty.

LXVIII. Since all entities are empty in their intrinsic being, the Interdependent Origination of entities is particularly demonstrated by the incomparable Tath@gata.

LXIX. The ultimate is none other than this (Emptiness). The Blessed Buddha, relying upon conventional usage imagined all possibilities.

LXX. The doctrine of the world is not destroyed. In reality, no factor at all is demonstrated. Not comprehending the proclamation of the Tath@gata, (ordinary people) are consequently afraid of the unsupported and unimaginable (truth).

LXXI. The way of the world, "dependent upon this, that originates", is not negated. What is interdependently originated is without intrinsic being, (so) how does it exist? This is perfect certitude.

LXXII. One who has faith, who diligently seeks the ultimate, not relying upon any demonstrated factor, inclined to subject the way of the world to reason, abandoning being and non-being (attains) peace.

LXXIII. Having comprehended apparent conditionality, the net of false views is swept aside. (Consequently), abandoning attachment, delusion and anger, without stain, one surely reaches Nirv@%a.

Section Three

Nagarjuna's Commentary to Emptiness: The Seventy Stanzas

Salutation to [rya Ma~jugho&a J~@nasattva.

I. Duration, origination, destruction, existence, non-existence, inferiority, mediocrity and superiority were taught by the Buddha in accord with conventional usage, not by the power of the real.

Whatsoever was taught by the Buddha in accord with **conventional usage**: **duration, origination, destruction**, **inferiority, mediocrity** and **superiority** were all not taught by the power of the **real**.

Here it is asked. Do not the so called self and so on and so forth which are spoken of exist at all? Since the consciousness which considers not-self occurs, the self must undoubtedly be existent.[10]

It is explained. **II. a There is not anything which corresponds to the expressions: not-self, not not-self, both self and not-self**

If it is asked why? - **II. b (Because) all factors which can be spoken of are - like Nirv@%a - in their intrinsic being, empty.**

Here it is asked. Is this (statement), "all entities are in their **intrinsic being empty**", a royal decree, or do some grounds exist by means of which to penetrate into the knowledge of the fact that all entities are in their **intrinsic being, empty**, as it is so?

Here it is explained. **III. Since the intrinsic being of all entities does not exist in the cause and conditions, either**

together or separately, or in any way, therefore they are empty. Thus it is explained.[11]

Moreover, **IV. The existent does not originate, because it is existent. The non-existent does not (originate) because it is non-existent. The existent and non-existent also does not (originate) because they are heterogeneous. Because there is no origination, there is no duration and no destruction.**

(An existent) entity does not originate from a cause, because it is existent. Now, **existent** is explained as being **existent**. The non-existent does not originate from a cause, because it is non-existent. The (both) existent and non-existent does not originate, because (they) are **heterogeneous**, that is mutually contradictory. Because what is both existent and non-existent is **heterogeneous** - having mutually contradictory properties - how does what is existent and non-existent originate? Because there is no **origination**, there is no **duration** and no **destruction**.

Here it is said. The three characteristics of the compounded factors - origination, duration and destruction - are proclaimed, and at the time of origination, origination is evident. Thus, there is origination of compounded factors from something.

Here it is explained. **V. The originated is not the object to be originated. The unoriginated is also not the object to be originated. The (object) at the time of origination is also not the object to be originated, because it would be originated and unoriginated.**

First, the originated is not the **object** to be originated - If it is asked - why? - Because it is already originated. An **object** which is already originated is not the **object** to be originated. The not originated is also not the **object** to be originated - why? - Because it is not originated. An **object** which is not originated is not the **object** to be originated, because (it) is without activity, without efficiency and non-existent. Thus, it is not the **object** to be originated. An **object** at the time of **origination** is also not the **object** to be originated - why? - Because it is exhausted between the originated and the unoriginated, and the **object** which is originated and the **object** which is not originated is also not the **object** to be

originated, simply because of the considerations explained above. Of the two, the first, the originated is not the **object** to be originated, because it is already originated and the **object** which is not originated is also not the **object** to be originated, because it is not originated, without the activity of **origination**, without efficiency and non-existent. Thus, for the reason that excluding the originated and the not originated, there is no third which is the moment of **origination**, the **object** at the time of **origination** is also not the **object** to be originated. Moreover, there is also no **origination**, because a cause is not justified - why? - Because,

VI. If the effect is existent, the cause will possess the effect. If non-existent, the cause will be equal to a non-cause. If neither existent nor non-existent, it is contradictory, nor again is a cause justified in the three times.

If the **effect** is existent, that which possesses the **effect** is a **cause**. If that **effect** is non-existent, then the **cause** will be equal to a **non-cause**. If the **effect** is neither existent nor non-existent, it is contradictory, because non-existence and existence cannot be present simultaneously. Moreover, a **cause** is not **justified** in **the three times**. It may be asked how? First, if it is supposed that the **cause** is prior (to the effect), of what is it the **cause**? Yet, if it is supposed that (the cause is) subsequent (to the effect), then what need is there for the **cause**, as the **effect** is already complete? Yet (again) if it is supposed that the **cause** and **effect** are simultaneous, then among the **cause** and the **effect** which originate simultaneously, which is the **cause** of which and which is the **effect** of which? Thus, in all **the three times**, a **cause** is not **justified**.[12]

Here, it is said, all entities are not empty, because number is justified. What are called one, two and many which are number are existent. Further, number is justified only if entities exist, therefore all entities are not empty.

Here it is explained. **VII. Without one, many does not occur. Without many, one does not occur. Therefore, interdependently originated entities are without signs.**

The originated is **without signs**, because without **one**, **many** does not occur and without **many**, **one** does not occur.

Therefore, entities are **interdependently originated** and hence in reality **without signs**.

Here it is said. Interdependent Origination which possesses the effect of suffering has been extensively demonstrated in the canonical discourses. It has also been demonstrated by masters who bestow instructions as justified in one moment of consciousness and in a series of moments of consciousness. Thus, all entities are not empty.

Here it is explained. **VIII. The twelve constituents of Interdependent Origination which possess the effect of suffering do not originate, as they are neither justified in one moment of consciousness, nor in a series of moments of consciousness.**

The twelve constituents of **Interdependent Origination** which possess the effect of suffering do **not originate**. They are neither justified in one moment of consciousness, nor in a series of moments of consciousness, since if in one moment of consciousness, the effect would originate simultaneously with the cause, while if in a series of moments of consciousness, the preceding constituents which have been destroyed could not be the cause of the succeeding ones. Thus, in either way, they (the twelve constituents) are not justified. Therefore, **Interdependent Origination** does **not originate**. It may be asked why (they) do **not originate**?

It is explained (that) **Interdependent Origination** is falsely imputed to originate from the cause of ignorance. That ignorance has also been shown to depend upon the condition of erroneous views. These erroneous views are also in their intrinsic being empty. It may be asked why?

IX. Impermanence is the negation of permanence. Not-self is the negation of self. Impurity is the negation of purity, and suffering is the negation of happiness. Therefore, there are no erroneous views.

Impermanence is the negation of **permanence**. Without **permanence**, its antidote - **impermanence** - is also non-existent. In this way, the remaining (propositions) should also be treated. Therefore, there are no **erroneous views**.[13]

X. Without them, there is no ignorance originated from the four erroneous views. Without it, volitions do not originate nor in the same way do the remaining (constituents).

Without these **erroneous views**, there is no **ignorance** originated from them. Without **ignorance**, **volitions** do not originate, nor in a like manner do the remaining (constituents) originate.

Moreover, **XI. Without volitions, ignorance does not originate. Without it (ignorance) volitions do not originate. Since they are mutually caused, they are not established in their intrinsic being.**

XII. How can what is itself not established in its intrinsic being produce another? Thus another condition which is not established is not what causes the origination of another.

First of all, **ignorance** does not originate without **volitions**. Without **ignorance** also, **volitions** do not originate. They are not established in their **intrinsic being**, because the two (of them) are **mutually caused**. How can what is itself not established in its **intrinsic being** produce another? Thus other conditions which are not established are not producers of something else.

Moreover, **XIII. The father is not the son, nor is the son the father, nor do they exist without mutual dependence, nor are they identical and so also the twelve constituents.**

First of all, the **father** is not the **son**, nor is the **son** the **father**. They do not exist without **mutual dependence**, nor are they **identical**. Just as through this procedure, the **father** and the **son** are (seen) to be not established, so also the **twelve constituents** are similarly (not established).

Moreover, **XIV. Neither the happiness and suffering which depend upon an object in a dream, nor that object are existent. Similarly, neither that which originates dependently, nor that upon which it depends are existent.**

For instance, neither the **happiness** and **suffering** which depend upon an **object** in a **dream**, nor the **object** are **existent**.

Similarly, neither that which **originates dependently**, nor again that upon which it depends are **existent**.

Here it is said. **XV. If entities are not existent in their intrinsic being, neither inferiority, mediocrity nor superiority, nor the manifold (objects of experience) are established, nor will there be anything established from a cause.**

Therefore, the statement that entities are not **existent** in their **intrinsic being** is not appropriate.

Here it is explained. **XVI. If intrinsic being were established, a dependent entity would not occur. But without dependence, how does (an entity) exist? Without intrinsic being (an entity) does not occur and with intrinsic being (an entity) cannot be destroyed.**

If entities were existent in their **intrinsic being**, dependent entities would not occur. In regard to this, it may be thought (that) entities exist even **without dependence**. Here it is explained. But **without dependence**, how does (an entity) exist? **Without dependence** also (an entity) cannot occur. If an **entity** were to occur even **without dependence**, it would not be without **intrinsic being**. If it were existent in its **intrinsic being**, it could not be **destroyed**, nor could it become non-existent. Thus it is explained.

Here it is said. The conceptions of what are called intrinsic being, extrinsic being, being and non-being and their support are not non-existent. Therefore, entities are not empty.

Here it is explained. **XVII. In what is non-existent, how are intrinsic being, extrinsic being and being possible? Therefore, intrinsic being, extrinsic being and non-being are erroneous.**

Thus, **non-existent** is explained as that which is not existent. In what is **non-existent**, how are what are called **intrinsic being**, **extrinsic being** and destruction possible? Therefore, **extrinsic being**, **non-being** and **intrinsic being** are **erroneous**.

Here it is said, **XVIII. If entities are empty, they can**

neither cease nor originate. How can what is empty in its intrinsic being either cease or originate?

If **entities** are **empty** in their **intrinsic being**, they can neither **cease** nor **originate**. If it is held that what is in its **intrinsic being empty** ceases and originates,(then) here it is said. How can what is **empty** in its **intrinsic being** either **cease** or **originate**?

Here it is explained. All factors are just empty - why? - Because, **XIX. Being and non- being are not identical. Without non-being, there is no being. Being and non-being will always occur. Without being, non-being does not arise.**

Being and **non-being** are not **identical**. It may be asked how this is explained? **Being** and **non-being** cannot be existent at the same time (and in the same place). Thus, it is explained. At this point, it may be thought that nothing other than **being** alone exists. Here it is explained. Without **non-being**, there is no **being**. Without **non-being**, **being** is not justified, because there is no **being** without impermanence. **Being** and **non-being** will always occur, that is, **being** will always be impermanent.

At this point, it may be thought that **being** is always bound up with impermanence, however, at the time of origination and duration, it (impermanence) is latent, but at the time of destruction, impermanence destroys **being**. Here it is explained. Without **being**, **non-being** does not arise. **Non-being** does not exist without **being** because without destruction, impermanence which has the characteristic of destruction is not appropriate. Without destruction, what is called impermanence is not justified. Therefore, there will always be precisely **being** and **non-being**.

Here it is said, there is nothing other than non-being alone. Here it is explained. **XX. Without being, there is no non-being. Being is not (originated) from itself and not (originated) from another. Thus, there is no being, and without it, there is no non-being.**

Without **being**, there is no **non-being** and that **being** neither originates from **itself** nor from **another**. Thus because of this argument, there is no existent **being**. Therefore **non-being**

does not arise. So it is explained. Without it (non-being), there is (also) **no being**. Without **being**, there is also no non-existence of that **being**, that is, the **non-being** of such a **being** is also impossible. Thus it is explained.[14]

Moreover, **XXI. If being were just existent, it would be permanent. If it were non-existent, it would surely be annihilated. If being were existent, it would be (both) these two. Therefore, being is not accepted.**

Being is not accepted, because if being were just **existent**, it would consequently be **permanent**. If it were **non-existent**, it would consequently surely be **annihilated**. If **being** were **existent**, it would consequently be (both) these two (permanent and annihilated).[15]

Here it is said. **XXII a. Because of continuity, those (consequences) do not exist. An entity ceases (to exist) when it has imparted a cause (to an effect).**

The two (consequences of) permanence and annihilation do not exist, because of the **continuity** of origination and destruction. An **entity** ceases (to exist) when it has imparted a **cause** (to an effect).

Here it is explained. **XXII b. Just as before, this is not established. Further, the fault of interrupting the continuity will occur.**

As we determined earlier, being and non-being are not identical.[16] Therefore, the **continuity** which you accept is just as before, **not established**. Moreover, the **fault** of interrupting the **continuity** will consequently occur.

Here it is said. **XXIII a. Through seeing origination and destruction, the path to Nirv@%a was demonstrated, not by means of Emptiness.**[17]

The path to **Nirv@%a** was demonstrated through seeing **origination** and **destruction**, but not because of **emptiness**.

Here it is explained **XXIII b. These are seen, because (they are) mutually contradictory and so are conceived as such.**

It is explained thus. (The opponents' objection implies that)

not through the knowledge of non- origination (was the path to Nirv@%a demonstrated). That (knowledge) which sees origination and destruction also sees origination to be the contrary of destruction and sees destruction also to be the contrary of origination. Therefore, since origination and destruction are **mutually contradictory** and the knowledge (of them) is also **mutually contradictory**, origination and destruction are seen. Therefore, again, there is only Emptiness, because origination is dependent upon destruction and destruction is dependent upon origination.

Here it is said. **XXIV a. If neither origination nor cessation are existent, the cessation of what is Nirv@%a?**[18]

If there is no **origination** and also no **cessation**, then the **cessation** of what is **Nirv@%a**?

Here it is explained. **XXIV b**. **Is not what is in its intrinsic being neither originated nor ceases liberation?**

Is not **liberation** what is in its **intrinsic- being** neither **originated** nor **ceases**?

Moreover, **XXV. If Nirv@%a were cessation, it would be annihilation. If it were supposed to be otherwise, it would be permanence. Therefore (Nirv@%a) is neither being nor non-being. It is such as is neither originated nor again ceases.**

If **Nirv@%a** were **cessation**, it would consequently be **annihilation**. If it were not **cessation**, it would consequently be **permanence**. Thus, **Nirv@%a** is neither **being** nor **non-being**. **Nirv@%a** is such as is neither **originated** nor **ceases**.

Here it is said. There is **cessation** and that too endures permanently.

Here it is explained. **XXVI a. If any cessation were existent, it would occur even without being.**

If any **cessation** endured, it would occur even without **being**. If any **cessation** were to endure even without **being**, then it would exist even without dependence.

It is explained thus. This is also not logical, because, **XXVI b**. **Without being, it (cessation) is also non-existent. Again,**

without non-being, it is non-existent.

Both without **being** and without **non-being** also, it, cessation, is not existent. It may be asked how is it explained? Also without **being** and also without **non-being** are explained as without depending upon **being** and without depending upon **non-being**.[19]

Here it is said. Entities are existent, because the substratum of the characteristic and the characteristic are inherently related.[20]

Here it is explained. **XXVII. The characteristic is established by the substratum of the characteristic. The substratum of the characteristic is established by the characteristic, but they are not established independently, nor are they established by one another. What is not established is not that which establishes another which is not established.**

The **characteristic** too is **established** by the **substratum of the characteristic**. The **substratum of the characteristic** too is **established** by the **characteristic**. However, they are not **established independently**, nor are they **established** by **one another**, that is, they are not reciprocally **established**. It is explained so. Since the **substratum of the characteristic** and the **characteristic** are disproved by this process, the **substratum of the characteristic** and the **characteristic** are not **established**, that is they are not what establishes entities.[21]

XXVIII. By this (analysis), cause and effect, experience and the subject of experience etc., as well as the subject and object of vision etc., what so ever (may exist) are all explained without exception.[22]

Here it is said. Those who affirm time distinguish manifold times, thus time is existent.

Here it is explained. **XXIX. The three times are non-existent and are mere imagination, because (they) are non-enduring, are reciprocally established, disordered, not established independently and (because) an entity is non-existent.**

Time is not established. It may be asked - why? - Because it is

non-enduring, that is, time is thought to be **non-enduring**. What is **non-enduring** cannot be apprehended. How (then) is a name affixed to what cannot be apprehended? Thus it (time) is not established. Moreover, since (the three times) are **reciprocally established**, they are imputed to be **reciprocally established**, that is, dependent upon the past, present and future are established. Dependent upon the present, past and future (are established) and dependent upon the future, past and present (time) are established. Time is not established, since (the three times) are imputed to be established dependently. (Moreover) it is not established, because (the three times) are **disordered**. The very (same) time, when compared with the present, is (called) present. The very (same time) is (called) past when compared with the future and the very (same time) is (called) future when compared with the past. Moreover, since substantial existence is not established, time is not **established independently**. Thus, it is not established. Moreover, it (time) is **non-existent** because an **entity** is **non-existent**. If an **entity** were established, time would also be established, yet, if sought, an **entity** is **non-existent** in its intrinsic being. Therefore, time is just not established in its intrinsic being, that is, it is just **mere imagination**. [23]

Here it is said. It was taught that all compounded factors possess three characteristics - origination, duration and destruction - and the opposite are the uncompounded factors. Therefore, the compounded and the uncompounded factors are existent.[24]

Here it is explained. **XXX. Because the three characteristics of the compounded (factors) - origination, duration and destruction- are non-existent, therefore the compounded (factors) and the uncompounded (factors) are not at all existent.**

Origination, duration and destruction which were taught to be the **three characteristics** of the **compounded** factors are not justified, if analyzed. Therefore, (they are) **non-existent**. Since they (the three characteristics) are **non-existent, compounded** factors and **uncompounded** factors are **not at all existent**.

Moreover, it is said (that) the **compounded** factors, even

though they be accepted, are **non-existent**, because if analyzed, they are not justified.

It may be asked why? **XXXI. The undestroyed is not destroyed, nor is the destroyed. The enduring does not endure, nor does the unenduring endure. The originated does not originate, nor does the unoriginated (originate).**

At this point, it may be considered whether the **originated** originates or the **unoriginated** (originates). In this case, first, the **originated** does not **originate**. It may be asked - why? - Because, it is already **originated**. The **unoriginated** also does not **originate**. Why? Because it is **unoriginated**. It may be considered whether the **enduring** endures or the **unenduring** (endures). In this case, the **enduring** does not **endure**, because it is already **enduring**. The **unenduring** also does not **endure**. Why? Because, it is **unenduring**. Finally, it may be considered whether the **destroyed** is **destroyed** or the **undestroyed** (is destroyed). Neither alternative is justified. Thus the compounded factors are non-existent, because even though they are accepted, they are not justified through these three processes. Since the compounded factors are not existent, the uncompounded factors are likewise impossible.

Moreover, **XXXII. The compounded (factors) and the uncompounded (factors) are neither manifold nor unitary, neither existent nor non-existent, nor both existent and non-existent. Within this perimeter, all possibilities are included.**

If analyzed, the **compounded** factors and the **uncompounded** factors are neither **manifold** nor **unitary**, neither **existent** nor **non-existent** nor **both existent** and **non-existent**. Thus it is explained that within this perimeter, that is within this, all these are included, in other words, without exception (or) completely. The possibilities included by these two (the compounded and uncompounded factors) should be known.[25]

Here it is said. **XXXIII. The Blessed One proclaimed the enduring of actions. The Preceptor proclaimed actions and their effects (and) that the sentient being is the agent of actions and that actions are not lost.**

In the canonical discourses, the Blessed One has in many ways explained **actions** and their **effects**. It is also proclaimed that **actions** are not without their **effects**. It is also proclaimed that **actions** are not **lost** and that the **sentient being** is the **agent of actions**. Thus, **actions** and the **effects** of **actions** are existent.

Here it is explained. **XXXIV. Because it has been demonstrated that they are without intrinsic being, actions do not originate, so they cannot be destroyed. Actions originate from self clinging. That clinging which produces actions also originates from imagination.**

Since, **actions** have already been demonstrated to be **without intrinsic being**, (they do not originate). Therefore, as they do not **originate**, they cannot be **destroyed**. Moreover, **actions originate** from that, **self clinging**, therefore, **self clinging** produces **actions**. That (self clinging) also **originates** from **imagination**.

Moreover, **XXXV. If actions existed in their intrinsic being, then the body originated from them would be permanent. They would not be endowed with the maturing effect of suffering. Therefore, actions would also be substantial.**

If **actions** existed in their **intrinsic being** (they would be permanent). If it were so, whatever bodies originate from those **actions** would also be **permanent**, that is their **intrinsic being** would be immutable. Thus it is explained. Moreover, they would not possess the **maturing effect of suffering**. Those **actions** would also not possess the **maturing effect of suffering**. Moreover, consequently **actions** would also be **substantial**. Since **actions** would be **permanent**, they would also be **substantial**, because what is impermanence is suffering and what is suffering is insubstantiality.[26] Thus **actions** are without **intrinsic being** and so do not originate. Since they do not originate, they are not lost.

Moreover, **XXXVI a. Actions originated from conditions are not in the least existent, nor are (actions) existent originated without conditions.**

It may be asked why? **XXXVI b. Compounded (factors) are**

like an illusion, a fairy city and a mirage.

Actions, even as originated from **conditions** are not existent, nor are (any actions) originated **without conditions** in the least existent. It may be asked - why? - (Because) **compounded** (factors) are like an **illusion**, a **fairy city** and a **mirage**. **Actions** are not existent in their intrinsic being, because **compounded** factors are like an **illusion**, a **fairy city** and a **mirage**.

Moreover, **XXXVII. Afflictions are the cause of actions. Volitions consist of actions and afflictions. Actions are the cause of the body, (therefore) all three are also empty in their intrinsic being.**

Since **actions** originate from the **cause** of **afflictions**, and since **volitions** originate from the **cause** of **actions** and **afflictions**, and since the **body** originates from the **cause** of **actions**, therefore, all three are also **empty** in their intrinsic being.

If it is so, **XXXVIII. Without actions, there is no agent. Without those two, there is no effect. Without it, there is consequently no subject of experience. Hence (they) are empty.**

Thus again, when logically analyzed, if the **effect** is not existent in its intrinsic being, there are no **actions**. Without **actions**, there is no **agent**. Without **actions** and the **agent**, there is no **effect**. Without it (the effect) there is no **subject of experience**. Therefore, (they) are **empty**.

Moreover, **XXXIX. If one knows very well actions to be empty, actions will not originate, because of that perception of the real. Without actions, that which originates from actions will not originate.**

If one knows very well the cause, **actions**, to be **empty** in their intrinsic being, **actions** will **not originate**, because of the **perception** of suchness. Without those **actions**, that which originates from **actions** will **not originate**.

Are (actions) just non-existent, or does something exist? It is explained. Something is existent. It may be asked how (is it so)?

XL. As the Blessed One, the Tath@gata creates an illusory creation by means of illusory emanation, that

illusory creation creates another illusory creation.

XLI. Among them, the illusory creation of the Tath@gata is empty. What need is there to say anything about the illusory creation of an illusory creation? They are both existent in so far as anything which is mere imagination.

XLII. Similarly, the agent is like the illusory creation (and) actions are like the illusory creation of an illusory creation. They are empty in their intrinsic being (and) exist insofar as anything which is mere imagination.

As the Blessed One, the **Tath@gata**, creates an **illusory creation** (for the purposes of teaching) through **illusory emanation**, and that creation also creates another **illusory creation**, so **actions** also should be similarly understood. Among them, first, if the **illusory creation** of the **Tath@gata** is **empty** in its intrinsic being, what need is there to say anything regarding the **illusory creation** of an **illusory creation**? The two are existent in so far as anything which is **mere imagination**. So **actions** are similar to this.

Moreover, **XLIII. If actions existed in their intrinsic being, there would be no Nirv@%a (and no) agent of actions. If (they were) non-existent, there would be no attractive and unattractive effects originated from actions.**

If the intrinsic being of **actions existed**, then **actions** would be established in their intrinsic being and there would be no attainment of **Nirv@%a**. Moreover, there would be no **agent of actions**. It may be asked - why? - Because, even without an **agent**, **actions** would be well established. If **actions** were **non-existent** in their intrinsic being, there would be no **attractive** and **unattractive effects** originated from **actions**.[27]

Here it is said, since it is extensively proclaimed in the canonical discourses that (actions) are existent, how can they be so said to be non-existent?

Here it is explained. **XLIV. There exists the statement of existence and also the statement of non-existence and again the statement of both existence and non-existence. The**

intentional proclamations of the Buddhas are not easily penetrated.

Even the statement of **existence** exists through superimposition. The statement of **non-existence** also exists through superimposition (and) the statement of (both) **existence and non-existence** also just (exists) through superimposition. The **intentional proclamations** of the **Buddhas** are never easily penetrated.[28]

Here it is said. At this point, form is held to be (originated) from the great elements. (Therefore) it is existent. The remaining factors which are not form are also existent in various ways.

Here it is explained. **XLV. If form were originated from the great elements, form would originate from a deficient (cause). It is not (originated) from its (own) intrinsic being. (Moreover), since it is non-existent, it is not (originated) from another.**

If it is held that **form** originates fom the **great elements** (then) if it were so, **form** would originate from a **deficient** (cause). From a **deficient** (cause) is explained as from an insubstantial (cause). Similarly, **form** is not (originated) from its **intrinsic being**.

Here it is said. So it is. It (form) is not (originated) from its **intrinsic being**, but it is (originated) from **another**, because the **great elements** are other than it.

Here it is explained. Since it is **non-existent**, it is not (originated) from **another**. It, **form**, is not (originated) from **another**. It may be asked why? - Since it is **non-existent**, the other is **non-existent**. Thus, since it is not established in its **intrinsic being**, the so called (origination) from **another** (of form) is not justified, because that which is **non-existent** cannot justly be called (originated) from (something which is) other than it. What is called other than the **non-existent** is not existent.

Moreover, the four **great elements** are **non-existent**, because in this case, if it were held that the **great elements** are established from (their) characteristics, it is also not justified that the characteristics be established prior to the elements. Since they

(the characteristics) are not established, (the substratum of the characteristics), the **great elements**, are also not established.

XLVI. In one also, four are not existent. In four also, one is not existent. How would form be established dependent upon the four non-existent great elements?

Thus, in the **four** (great elements) also, **one** (that is form) is **non-existent**. In **one** (that is form) also, the **four** (great elements) are **non-existent**. How (then) would form be established dependent upon the **four non-existent great elements**? **Non-existent** is explained as (meaning) **non-existent**.

Moreover, **XLVII. Because, it is never apprehended. (But) if it is said, from the evidence (form is established). That evidence is non-existent, because originated from cause and conditions. If it (form) is still existent, the non-existence of the evidence is not logical.**

Since form is **never apprehended**, it is just **non-existent**. It may be asked why? - Since it is **never apprehended**, form is just not apprehended. How could what cannot be apprehended be what is said to exist? Here, in this case, it is thought that **from the evidence**, (form is established). If the **evidence**, the awareness which considers form, that is awareness of form, is **existent**, what is called form will be established, because without an object, awareness (of an object) would not occur. Therefore, form is (proved to be) **existent from the evidence** of awareness.

Here it is explained. If it is said, **from the evidence** (form is established), that **evidence** is **non-existent**. That **evidence** is **non-existent**, that is, it is not existent. It may be asked - why? - Because originated from **cause** and **conditions**. Therefore, it is **non-existent**, because the **evidence** of awareness is originated from **cause** and **conditions**.

Moreover, if it (form) is still **existent**, the **non-existence** of the **evidence is not logical**. If form is still **existent**, the **non-existence** of the **evidence** of the existence of form is **not logical**, that is, the **non-existence** of the presence of the **evidence is not logical**.

Moreover, **XLVIII. If (awareness) apprehended form, it**

would be apprehended as the very intrinsic being (of awareness). How could non-existent awareness originated from conditions apprehend non-existent form?

If **form** were apprehended (by awareness), then it would be of the very intrinsic being (of awareness), that is, of the substance of **awareness**. This explains that it (form) would be apprehended as the very own substance (of awareness).[29] (However) that is also not verified, since it (form) cannot be apprehended by (awareness) itself. Since that **awareness** is empty in its intrinsic being, therefore, how could that non-existent (awareness) originated from cause and **conditions** apprehend a **non-existent form**?

Here it is said, in the canonical discourses, it is abundantly proclaimed that past and future form are apprehended. Thus, the apprehension of **form** exists.

Here it is explained. **XLIX. When the originated momentary awareness does not apprehend the originated momentary form, how could it comprehend past and future form?**

In this case, both **form** and **awareness** are also thought to be **momentary**. When the originated **awareness** which is **momentary** does not apprehend the originated **form** which is (also) **momentary**, how could it comprehend **past** and **future form**, that is since, (past and future form) are impossible, they cannot be apprehended. **How** signifies clarification, because by this reasoning, **form** is never apprehended.

Moreover, even though (form) be accepted to be (constituted by) colour and shape, the apprehension of **form** is simply not justified. It may be asked why?

L. While colour and shape never exist separately, the separate are not apprehended as one, because the two are known as form.

If **color** and **shape** were really **separate**, it would consequently be justified that the two be apprehended as **separate**, (but) when **color** and **shape** are held to be **form**, it is not justified.

Moreover **LI. Eye awareness is not existent in the eye. It is not existent in form, nor (in the space) in between. What is**

constructed dependent upon the eye and form is erroneous.

If it is examined, **eye awareness** is non-existent even in the **eye**. It is not existent in **form**, nor again is it existent (in the space) in between the two. What is (conceptually) **constructed** to originate **dependent** upon the **eye** and **form** is **erroneous**.

Here it is said, the **eye** etc. - the sense spheres - are existent and so are the objects of the sense of sight etc. existent. Among them, the **eye** sees **form**, and the ear etc. respectively (function) in a like manner.

Here it is explained. **LII. If the eye does not see itself, how can it see form? Therefore, the eye and form are insubstantial. The remaining sense spheres are also similar.**[30]

LIII. The eye is empty of its own substantiality. It is empty of another's substantiality. Form is also similarly empty (and) the remaining sense spheres are also similar.

Similarly indicates similarity, (that is) just as **form** is **empty** of its **own substantiality** and of **another's substantiality**, so also the remaining **sense spheres** are **empty** of their **own substantiality** and of **another's substantiality**. Thus, **form** is **empty** of its **own substantiality** and of **another's substantiality**.

Moreover, (form) is also **empty**, because it is dependently originated. In this case, what is established from the great elements of **form** which have functioned as the cause is established dependently. Hence, what is established dependently is not established in its intrinsic being. Thus, **form** is **empty** of its own intrinsic being. **Form** is **empty** of **another's substantiality** also since other than it (form) are the **eye** and **awareness**. The **eye** along with **awareness** are the (epistemological) subject, and **form** is the object. What is the (epistemological) object is not the (epistemological) subject. Thus, it (form) is also **empty** of **another's substantiality**.

Alternatively, **awareness** is internal, while **form** is an object and external, that is it is not internal. Therefore, (form) is also **empty** of **another's substantiality**.

It may be asked from what, that is from what is (eye) **awareness** dependently originated, and how is it dependently originated? **Awareness** is established dependent upon the object to be comprehended and so forth. What is dependently originated is not established in its **own substantiality**. Thus, that **awareness** is **insubstantial**. Therefore, what is said, (that is) that **awareness** apprehends subtle objects etc., is not appropriate. **Form** is also **similarly empty** indicates that **form** is like that (that is the eye). (In other words), just as the **eye** is **empty** of its **own substantiality** and of **another's substantiality**, **similarly form** is **empty** of its **own substantiality** and of **another's substantiality**.

It may be asked how **form** is **empty** of its **own substantiality** and of **another's substantiality**? (It is explained). Because the intrinsic being of all entities is not existent in all entities. This (method of) examination has already been explained.[31] Its significance is that if examined, all entities are not existent, since the intrinsic being of all entities is not existent. The significance of (the word) **empty** is (in this case) unperceived.

The **eye** is **empty**, because it is dependently originated, that is, because the **eye** is established dependently. What is established dependently is not established in its **own substantiality**. Thus, the **eye** is **empty** in its **own substantiality**. If it were held that it is existent in **another's substantiality**, that is also not appropriate. It may be asked why? - How could what is non-existent in its **own substantiality** be existent in another's intrinsic being? That is, it also is not existent in another's intrinsic being. Thus, it is **empty** of **another's substantiality**. Alternatively, **empty** of **another's substantiality** also (may be explained as follows). So, other than that (form) is **awareness**. This means that the **eye** is also **empty** of **awareness**. It may be asked - why? - Because the **eye** is not existent as cognition, and because what is not cognition is not capable of becoming existent as the substance of cognition, therefore (it) is also **empty** of **another's substantiality**. Moreover, the **eye** is **empty**.

Here it is said (that) the **eye** sees by itself, but not so

awareness. It may be asked - why? - Because **awareness** is what apprehends, (in other words) because **awareness** apprehends subtle objects etc., so it is (known as) **awareness**. The **eye** (on the other hand) sees by itself. Thus, the **eye** is of the substance of clear great elements. That is the nature of the **eye**. What apprehends it (the object) is **awareness** alone. Similarly, what apprehends color differences of shape and **form** is **awareness** alone. Thus, what you have said, **if the eye does not see itself, how can it see form?-** is not justified.

Here it is explained. That is not so. It may be asked why? - **The eye is empty of its own substantiality**. **It is empty of another's substantiality**. **Form is also similarly empty (and) the remaining sense spheres are also similar**.

In this case, the **eye** is **empty** of its **own substantiality**. What is called its **own substantiality** is (the eye) itself. **If the eye does not see itself, how can it see form?** Since what does not see itself cannot see **form** either, the **eye** is **insubstantial**, that is without intrinsic being. So it is explained.

Moreover, **form** is **insubstantial** inasmuch as what does not appear is not **form**. The remaining **sense spheres** are also similar. Through this process, the remaining **sense spheres** are (seen to be) without substantiality, that is without intrinsic being.

Moreover, **LIV. When one (sense sphere) is conjoined through contact, then the others are empty. The empty also does not depend upon the non-empty. The non-empty too (does not depend) upon the empty.**

When one sense sphere is united with **contact**, the others are **empty**. What is **empty** also does not depend upon the **non-empty**. The **non-empty** also does not depend upon the **empty**.

Moreover, **LV. The three (which are) non-existent and unenduring in their intrinsic being do not (participate) in conjunction. Because there is no contact of that nature, therefore, feeling is not existent.**

The three (object, organ and consciousness) that are **non-existent** and **unenduring** in their intrinsic being do not (participate) in **conjunction**. Because there is no **conjunction**,

there is no **contact of that nature** (that is, of the nature of conjunction). In other words, there is no **contact** originated from it (conjunction). Thus it is explained. Because there is no **contact**, **feeling** is **non-existent**.[32]

Moreover, **LVI. Dependent upon the inner and outer sense spheres, consciousness originates. Thus there is no consciousness. (It) is empty like a mirage and an illusion.**

Since **consciousness** originates **dependent upon the inner and outer sense spheres**, there is consequently also no **consciousness**. That is, it is **empty** like a **mirage** and an **illusion**.

It may be thought here that **consciousness** (that is) the agent of **consciousness** is existent. That is also not justified. It may be asked why?

LVII. Consciousness originates dependent upon an object of consciousness, therefore it is non-existent. Without cognition and an object of consciousness, there is consequently no subject of consciousness at all.

Here it is said. It is proclaimed that all is impermanent. Through the demonstration that all is impermanent, non-emptiness is also (implicitly) demonstrated.

Here it is explained **LVIII. All is impermanent (but) impermanence or permanence never existed. (If) an entity existed, it would be impermanent or permanent (but) how is it so existent?**

Here, what is meant by (the conventional expression) **all is impermanent** should be understood (in the correct perspective), because **impermanence or permanence never existed**. If **an entity existed**, it would be **impermanent** or **permanent**, (but) how is such **an entity existent**? That is it is non-existent. So it is explained.

Here it is said. As it is extensively demonstrated in the canonical discourses, attachment, aversion and delusion are existent.

Here it is explained. **LIX. Born from the conditions - attraction, repulsion and error - attachment, aversion and delusion originate. Therefore, attachment, aversion and**

delusion are non-existent in their intrinsic being.

Since dependent upon the condition of **attraction**, the condition of **repulsion** and the condition of **error**, **attachment, aversion** and **delusion** originate, therefore **attachment, aversion** and **delusion** are **non-existent** in their **intrinsic being**.

Moreover, **LX. Because regarding it (a single given object) attachment, aversion and delusion (occur), therefore, they (attachment, aversion and delusion) are produced from imagination. Imagination also is perfectly non-existent.**

Because regarding just one (object), **attachment, aversion** and **delusion** (occur), therefore **attachment aversion** and **delusion** are produced from **imagination**. Moreover, (such) imaginary constructions are also unreal, so the imaginary constructions which produce **attachment, aversion** and **delusion** are also **perfectly non-existent**.[33] It may be asked, how are they **non-existent**?

Here it is explained. **LXI. The object of imagination is not existent. Without the object of imagination, how is imagination existent? Therefore, since (they are) originated from conditions, the object of imagination and imagination are empty.**

That which is the **object of imagination** is non-existent. Without the **object of imagination**, how could **imagination** exist? Since (they are) originated from **conditions**, the **object of imagination** is also **empty** in its intrinsic being and **imagination** is likewise **empty** in its intrinsic being.[34]

Moreover, **LXII. Because of the perception of the real, there is no ignorance originated from the four erroneous views. Since that (ignorance) is non-existent, volitions do not originate. The remaining (constituents) are also similar.**

Thus, because of the comprehension of the **real, ignorance** originated from the **four erroneous views** does not originate. Since it is non-existent, without it, **ignorance**, **volitions** do not originate. Similarly, the remaining (constituents of Interdependent Origination) do not originate.

Moreover, **LXIII. What originates dependent upon that,**

originates from that. Without that, (it) does not originate. Entities and non-entities (as well as) compounded factors and uncompounded factors are peace and Nirv@%a.

What **originates dependent** upon **that originates** from **that** (and it) does not **originate** without **that**. **Entities** and **non-entities** are **peace** and **compounded factors** and **uncompounded factors** are **peace** and **Nirv@%a**.

Moreover **LXIV a. Entities originated from cause and conditions are imputed to be real.**

(That is) considering, viewing, imputing and apprehending them to be permanent **entities**, **LXIV. b That is proclaimed to be ignorance by the Preceptor. From it, the twelve constituents originate.**

Moreover, **LXV. Because of the perception of the real, of entities as empty, ignorance does not originate. Just that is the cessation of ignorance, therefore, the twelve constituents cease.**

The non-origination of **ignorance** (occurs) because of the complete and perfect comprehension of **entities** as **empty** in their intrinsic being, just as (they) are (in fact). (That) is the **cessation of ignorance**. Therefore, the **twelve constituents cease**.

It may be asked why? **LXVI. Compounded factors are like a fairy city, an illusion, a mirage, a bubble of water, foam and like a dream and the circle of the whirling fire-brand.**

Since, if extensively examined, **compounded factors** are like an **illusion**, a **mirage** and a **fairy city**, therefore, if they are very well comprehended to be empty in their intrinsic being, ignorance does not originate. Just that is the cessation of ignorance. Therefore, the twelve constituents cease.

LXVII. No entity whatsoever is existent in its intrinsic being. In this case, a non-entity also is non-existent. Entities and non-entities originated from cause and conditions are empty.

If sought, ultimately **no entity whatsoever is existent in its intrinsic being.** In this case, there is also no **non-entity** whatsoever. **Entities and non-entities originated from cause**

and conditions are empty.

LXVIII. Since all entities are empty in their intrinsic being, the Interdependent Origination of entities is particularly demonstrated by the incomparable Tath@gata.

Since **all entities** are **empty** in their **intrinsic being**, this **Interdependent Origination** of **entities** is particularly demonstrated by the **Tath@gata**.

LXIX. The ultimate is none other than this (Emptiness). The Blessed Buddha, relying upon conventional usage imagined all possibilities.

From the **ultimate** (standpoint) all interdependently originated entities are empty in their intrinsic being. So it is said that there is no other (truth) than this. **The Blessed Buddha**, relying upon **conventional usage**, in **ultimate** suchness, **imagined** all possibilities without exception.[35]

LXX. The doctrine of the world is not destroyed. In reality, no factor at all is demonstrated. Not comprehending the proclamation of the Tath@gata, (ordinary people) are consequently afraid of the unsupported and unimaginable (truth).

Even the factors which are explained according to (the conventions) of the world are **not destroyed**. In **reality**, a **factor** is never demonstrated. Thus, not knowing the meaning of interdependence and **not comprehending** the proclamation of **the Tath@gata**, the ignorant, therefore, are afraid of the **unsupported** and **unimaginable** (truth), that is the signless.

LXXI. The way of the world, "dependent upon this, that originates", is not negated. What is interdependently originated is without intrinsic being, (so) how does it exist? This is perfect certitude.

The order of **the world**, that is, "**dependent upon this, that originates**", is **not negated**. Since what is **interdependently originated**, is without **intrinsic being**, how does what is non-existent exist? This (rhetorical question expresses) **certitude**.[36]

LXXII. One who has faith, who diligently seeks the

ultimate, not relying upon any demonstrated factor, inclined to subject the way of the world to reason, abandoning being and non-being (attains) peace.

One who has **faith**, who diligently seeks the **ultimate**, not relying upon **any demonstrated factor**, who is inclined and willing **to subject** the order of the world **to reason**, abandoning **being** and **non-being** attains **peace**.

LXXIII. Having comprehended apparent conditionality, the net of false views is swept aside. (Consequently), abandoning attachment, delusion and anger, without stain, one surely reaches Nirv@%a.

Notes

Part One

Section One

[1] Ramanan, K.V., *N@g@rjuna's Philosophy*, Bharatiya Vidya Prakashan, Varanasi, India, 1971, p.25

[2] R@hulabhadra is also known as the Mahasiddha Saraha

[3] Takakusu, J., (Tr.) *A Record of the Buddhist Religion as Practiced in India and the Malay Archipelago* (AD 671-695) by I–Tsing, Munshiram Manoharlal, Delhi, India, 1966, p. 162

Section Two

[1] *Sugata* is an epithet of the Buddha meaning one who has gone well to the further shore of the ocean of worldly existence.

[2] According to Indian thought *N@gas* are creatures which possess bodies that are half human and half snake. They are believed to dwell in the earth and to influence rainfall, protect wealth, etc.

[3] The commentary indicates that this refers to the root disciplines of a monk as mentioned in the Vinaya

[4] The seven suns arise at the end of a great aeon (*mah@kalpa*). Each of these aeons is presided over by its own human Buddha.

[5] The eighteen opportune conditions which are necessary for the practice of Dharma are:

(1) freedom from the realm of the hells,
(2) freedom from the realm of the hungry ghosts,
(3) freedom from the realm of animals,
(4) freedom from the realm of long-lived gods
(5) freedom from being a heretic,
(6) freedom from being a barbarian,
(7) freedom from being a fool,
(8) freedom from being where there is no teaching from a Buddha,
(9) to have gained a human birth ,
(10) to have gained birth in a central realm (where the Sa ` gha exists),
(11) to possess sound organs,
(12) to be free from actions which conflict with the Dharma,
(13) to have faith in the Holy Dharma,
(14) the advent of a Buddha in the world,
(15) the existence of the teaching of the pure religion,

(16) the continuity and stability of the pure religion,
(17) being a believer and follower of the Buddha's teaching an
(18) having a loving and compassionate heart.

[6]*Brahm@* refers to the gods of the sphere of form and the formless sphere.

[7]To see a more detailed explanation of the meaning of Interdependent Origination, see N@g@rjuna's The Heart of Interdependent Origination contained in this book.

[8]The Buddha-field of the Buddha Amit@bha is called the Happy Land, (*sukh@vat$)*.

Part Two

[1]ed. Vaidya, P.L., Buddhist Sanskrit Texts, no. 17

[2]Asa<ga and Vasubandhu, Madhy@ntavibh@ga and Madhy@ntavibh@gabh@&ya 1.11b

[3]The Heart of Inte rdependent Origination, Stanza III

[4]ibid. Stanza IV

[5]Tibetan: no- bo- nid, Sanskrit: *svabh@va*, is here distinguished from the Tibetan: ran-zin Sanskrit: *prak=ti*. Although the term, ran-zin can also be rendered as *svabh@va* to the doctrine of Svabh@vav@da adhered to by one school of Materialists.

[6]Tibetan: sems-can, Sanskrit: *sattva*, literally means "one endowed with consciousness or mind" is used here in the sense of "Self" or "Supreme Self"

[7]Tibetan: dag-gi-ba, Sanskrit: *@tm$ya*, is the genitive case of self. Thus it can be translated mine or that pertaining to a self. t refers to the psycho-physical factors (*dharmas)* or aggregates (*skandhas)* as it can be readily understood from *The Foundation Stanzas of the Middle Way,* XVIII.

[8]That is an act of mental im position. Once again, the role of mental functions in the forging of the bond between cause and effect is emphasized.

[9]A crystal used in the manner of a magnifying glass to concentrate the sun's rays.

Part Three

[1]XXV

[2]The Madhyamaka and Modern Western Philosophy, Philosophy East and West

[3] Vigravy@vartan$

[4]29 & 63

[5]The benedictory Stanza to *The Foundation Stanzas of the Middle Way* also refers to the Buddha as the teacher of Interdependent Origination and closely resembles the Stanza here.

[6]*The Foundation Stanzas of the Middle Way*, I.3

[7]*ibid*. VII. 34

[8]i.e. the inanimate universe

[9]Here the realms are five rather than six because the realms of gods and demi-gods are counted as one.

[10]*The Foundation Stanzas of the Middle Way*, VII. 16

[11]*ibid*. XXV. 19 & 20

[12]*Dar^anam@rga* is one of the five paths found in the *Abhisamay@la ` k@ra* and other texts.

[13] A forthright declaration of the phenomenal primacy of conciousness.

[14]The apprehension of conciousness as the self-subject-personality.

Part Four

[1]*Emptiness: The Seventy Stanzas*, V

[2]*The Foundation Stanzas of the Middle Way*, ch. XVIII

[3]*ibid*., ch. V

[4]*ibid*., ch.XVII

[5]*Emptiness: The Seventy Stanzas*, XXXIII-XLIII

[6]*ibid*. XL-XLII

[7]*The Foundation Stanzas of the Middle Way*, ch.XXV. 19 & 20

[8]*ibid*., ch. III & ch. IV

[9]*Emptiness: The Seventy Stanzas*, LII

[10]The objection probably proceeds from a *Naiy@yika* who holds that negation implies the reality of the negatum. *Refutation of Objections*, XI, XII, LXI &LXII

[11]See *Refutation of Objections*, I & XXI

[12]See *The Foundation Stanzas of the Middle Way*, ch. I, VII & XX

[13]See *ibid*., ch. XXIII

[14]See *ibid*., ch. V. 6, 7, 8 & ch. XV

[15]The term "consequently" indicates the *reductio ad absurdum*

[16]*Emptiness: The Seventy Stanzas*, XIX

[17]An objection from the Buddhist Realists

[18]An objection from the Buddhist Realists

[19]See *The Foundation Stanzas of the Middle Way*, ch. XXV

[20]The contention of the Realists

[21]See *The Foundation Stanzas of the Middle Way*,ch. V

[22]This indicates the existence of a system of variables in the logic of N@g@rjuna

[23]See *The Foundation Stanzas of the Middle Way*,ch. XIX

[24]The position of the Buddhist Realists

[25]See *The Foundation Stanzas of the Middle Way*,ch VII

[26]This is a reference to the three marks

[27]See *The Foundation Stanzas of the Middle Way* , ch XVII

[28]N@g@rjuna indicates the importance of th e conception of intensional teaching, i.e.,teaching which has an ulterior purpose

[29]An anticipation of the *Saddharmap#%}ar$ka* theory of perception

[30]See *The Foundation Stanzas of the Middle Way*,ch. III. 2

[31]*Emptiness: The Seventy Stanzas*, III

[32]See *The Foundation Stanzas of the Middle Way*,ch. III & IV and *Refutation of Objections*, XXXff

[33]An anticipation of Asa<ga's analysis of the ambivalence of objects

[34]See *The Foundation Stanzas of the Middle Way*, ch. XVIII. 5

[35]See *ibid.*, ch. XXIV. 18 &19

[36]*ibid.*, ch.XXIV.10 & ch. XXV. 24